



Connecticut Association of Prevention Practitioners, Inc.

**March 13, 2015 Testimony Regarding Raised Bill 1064
Given by John Daviau, President, Connecticut Association of Prevention Practitioners**

Dear Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is John Daviau, I am the President of the Connecticut Association of Prevention Practitioners or CAPP, and I thank you for the opportunity to be heard today regarding Raised Bill 1064 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PALLIATIVE USE OF MARIJUANA.

CAPP views RB 1064 with mixed interests. First, we would like to applaud the Judiciary Committee for their interest in supporting research into the benefits of marijuana as medicine. CAPP wholeheartedly supports any initiative that scientifically researches and brings to clinical trials marijuana's beneficial ingredients to treat illnesses and diseases.

We would like to encourage the Judiciary Committee to include language in RB 1064 that has CT coordinate with other state's that are researching marijuana for medical benefits. For example, both NY and GA have partnered with a British pharmaceutical company, GW Pharmaceuticals, that has developed a new experimental drug called Epidiolex, a pure CBD oil. CBD's are a non-psychoactive cannabinoid found in marijuana, and some case studies have shown CBD's may be an effective treatment for seizure disorders. Both GA & NY have started clinical trials with Epidiolex to determine its effectiveness, appropriate dosages, and any contraindications. This is the kind of medical marijuana that CAPP supports.

CAPP is concerned on the other hand with RB 1064's expansion of medical marijuana to children, as recent research has demonstrated the serious harms of marijuana on the developing adolescent brain. For example:

- Research has demonstrated that 1 in 6 kids who try marijuana become addicted to it. Using data from the CT Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CT YRBS) on the rates of high school aged youth's marijuana use and 2010 US census data for CT, we can estimate that there are about 10,000 CT high school students right now who are addicted to marijuana.

Anthony, J.C., Warner, L.A., & Kessler, R.C. (1994); Giedd. J.N., 2004

- A Duke University Study showed that youth who regularly use marijuana 3-5 times per week can lose an average of 8 IQ points, and this loss of intelligence seems permanent since they maintained this loss into their late thirties, even if they stopped using marijuana in their twenties.

Meier, M.H., et al., 2012; MacLeod, J., et al., 2004.

- A third study from just last September concluded that youth who are daily users of cannabis before age 17 are over 60% less likely to complete high school or obtain a degree compared to those who have never used the drug, demonstrating marijuana's harm to our future workforce here in CT.

The Lancet Psychiatry, Silins & Mattick Sept. 2014

There are many more examples of the harms of marijuana on adolescents that I won't take time here to review. CAPP encourages the Judiciary Committee to remove the youth and medical marijuana components from RB 1064 and defer this issue to your colleagues on the Public Health Committee who had a public hearing earlier this week on ***An Act Concerning A Study Of The Palliative Use Of Marijuana For Children.***

CAPP is also concerned about impact of RB 1064 on hospitals and health care institutions, and encourages the Committee to consult with these institutions prior to voting on this bill.

Finally, since we are taking another look at the Palliative use of Marijuana, The Connecticut Association of Prevention Practitioners would like to encourage the Judiciary Committee to include better safeguards in our current law. The concept of "smoked medicine" has no basis in any sound medical practice. Both the states NY and MN considered this issue when they passed medical marijuana laws without allowing smoked marijuana. This change in CT law would have a significant and positive impact on medical marijuana use in our state.

We also encourage the Committee to consider the ramifications of allowing any certified patient, regardless of their debilitating condition, medical history, size, weight etc. to be allowed 2.5 ounces of medical marijuana per month. That is a lot of pot! CAPP is primarily concerned with our youth, and given that 74% of youth in treatment for marijuana addiction in Denver CO reported obtaining their pot from a medical marijuana card holder (at least 50 times), and given the arrests that are already occurring in CT where certified patients are repackaging and selling their pot on the street (there was a highly publicized case in Middletown in January), CAPP encourages the Judiciary Committee to amend 1064 to reduce the amount of marijuana each patient is allowed per month, unless their doctor signs off on larger quantities.