

Good Morning/Afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board and members of the Legislature,

Before we begin, I would like to thank Rep. Michel from the 146<sup>th</sup> district and Rep. Elliot of the 88<sup>th</sup>, for proposing HB 5442 to the Public Health Committee and pushing for the people to be heard. My name is Taylor Nicholas, I am currently a Vernon resident, and I have lived in Connecticut for a majority of my life. I am here today to implore you to recognize "Chronic Pain" as a qualifying condition for CT's Medical Marijuana program. Currently as it stands though out of the 45 states that have an MMJ program, 21 states including the Capitol have Chronic Pain as a qualifying condition yet CT is not among them. How can CT claim to have one of the greatest MMJ programs then? Yes, CT currently have the most in-depth list of qualifying conditions, but we as a state can't claim to be the best when other states have been utilizing cannabis for this condition for years prior to us? I as a veteran, personally would like to see this condition added simply due to the fact that I, myself utilize cannabis for my pain management throughout my body, but I am not alone when it comes to this manner. In my experience with other veterans they also find comfort and relief with this plant, so why do we as a state not give our veterans a safer alternative for pain management?