

Hello My name is Mr. Brandon Pervis and I just got off the phone with my assistant who was out not well and submitted my response that I would like to read at todays meeting regarding An Act Concerning the Retail Sale of Cannabis. If you could please include and give to the State Leadership or to whom it may concerns, I also wish to speak if allowed on behalf of my patients and nursing students. However, I am running a little late in my session so I may be a little late traveling to Hartford from my office in Waterbury. So out of respect for the other presenters and stakeholders if my response can be held last to be read if individuals are not allowed to read. Thanks in advance. Sent per request of office. Please confirm Receipts. Thanks again Please find my response below as well as attached to this email for easy viewing. To Whom It May Concern

My name is Brandon D. Pervis Sr and lack of resources, but I am a local family nurse practitioner, business owner and local concerned resident regarding the potential cannabis cultivation laws as well as proposals for cultivation as well as social equality regarding the industry to affected at-risk patient populations. I am writing this letter on behalf of a colleague as well as numerous of my chronically ill patients who have been able to manage, palliatively speaking with medical marijuana achieving the positive patient outcome they desired all along from the health care system for them and their families.

I am writing this letter as well out of moral obligation because he that has much must display great responsibility. Moreover, as a lifelong resident community nurse and nurse practitioner business owner all while coming from the at-risk patient population that needs help that I will talk about today. State of CT Finance Committee, please accept this letter as my thoughts regarding the pending legislation that you will discuss today on April 29, 2019, titled "An Act Concerning the Retail Sale of Cannabis." However, if you cannot I understand, and please accept this letter with the most profound humility and gratitude for the committee as well as to all the other groups that have spoken to you and who have worked tirelessly even to get this bill to this point, I salute you.

I will start this brief essay by saying I have a unique perspective that is rare in today's industry or health care system. We are at a critical time in the history of medicine and society where what we knew about pharmacy and medicine are changing and being more focus on prevention and wellness, which I agree with in some instances, which is a good thing because the evidence is showing that the majority of chronic conditions addressing many with lifestyle measures like diet, exercise, relaxation and alternative therapies (i.e., Acupuncture).

While the amount of antedotal studies, which are the only we can conduct at this moment, are showing grow breaking research regarding Cannabis as a therapeutic agent either evidence to back it up. In my humbly rightfully earned medical opinion I state that " in my medical opinion not only as an

FNP but one of the few willing to risk for their career to let their patient have a voice. A would say that Cannabis should be allowed back into adult consumption as it was before in this very country less than one hundred years ago. So to ensure that my patients' voice audible would like to submit my opinion in favor passage of the bill titled "An Act Concerning the Retail Sale of Cannabis.

" I would also recommend implementing the strategy identified already by my colleagues regarding reinvesting in the affected communities and individuals affected by this senseless "War on People."

In summary, my opinion is similar but different than Dr. Sanjay Guptya and Judge Francis Young(1988) whom both concluded that Cannabis is safe for consumption and needs to remove from the Schedule 1 category. My opinion is that Cannabis is safe for certain conditions in specific patient populations, just as any other alternative medicine I may prescribe a patient. I do think their needs to be more funding through randomized controlled trial (RCTs) that need to be funded and conducted and allowed to be done by the states to study the long term effects both positive in negative of Cannabis.

However in the meantime due to federal regulations that are only a fairy tale and many patients especially at-risk minorities are not getting the care they need and deserve and we swore to give them as their public health leaders. However, they face a system where they often can't afford the rate many of my colleagues have to charge as they are solo providers, but regardless the patient cannot pay. Therefore the patient goes without the accurate diagnosis, evaluation and more importantly natural therapeutic they need for their health and well-being. However, as a servant of God, father, brother and human being think that is unfair, and a continuation of a system of oppression of the same people need the help. Since this is the healthcare system we live in at the current moment it is best to approve "An Act Concerning the Retail Sale of Cannabis" and lets right a wrong and do as my hero, whom I was fortunate to receive an award for taught me at St. Vincent's College. The time to act is all ways right now. Please do the right thing and give your approval for this plan because it sounds like a great sound foundation to build of off.

The establishment of a Cannabis Committee and establishment of rules similar to other states through the country that is aiming at allowing the system that did so many minorities or people color that looks like my self unjustly for a substance other states are capitalizing off of as well as helping empower communities. SO I must admit that me as a local kid that grew up not only in Connecticut but New Haven at the height of the drug epidemic of the 1980s and saw the damage of the war on drugs which as many of my industry contemporaries has shared that was a "War on People." However, I'm not blaming anyone which would shift responsibility which would be moving the burden, and we didn't need another person in our community

blaming instead we need one bridging and understanding. Those that carried out the orders or the fruit of the tree so to speak because they were doing as told, so you can't blame them who hasn't. However, we need to see this unique opportunity for what is its way to heal so many wrongs and to help a community to improve that is suffering below the poverty line mainly due to a lack of resources, and that is our job, not their responsibility.

Just as my former boss at the clinic taught me it is our job not to be comfortable as leaders but to ask the uncomfortable questions. Because our job is to get them, to see that the community is the leader and the way to help the city is by building up the individual, however, we are faced with a community that has long exited the healthcare system mentally and who could blame them. However, it remains our job as the need medical community leaders to lead the change we wish to see, and that starts with knowledge. We must have infrastructure and committees of real front line stakeholders, maybe even a patient help to identify the needed research to evaluate and adopt and adapt best practices to ensure our beautiful State residents get the services they need. I think that the idea of a Cannabis Commission and community escrow account are great ideas.

However, I would give serious consideration and think about whom you select for the crucial commission especially initially because this will be what the State presents to the people as a solution to the "War on People" as many of my fellow cannabis providers have started to deem this current time in history and medicine. Regardless of opinion, representation is crucial and critical to the adoption of a change of culture because if the people that you are leading don't see anything in you, they will stop following you. When I say representation, I don't mean a color or race, but I need someone that represents the same values of peace, patient, collaboration, and understanding.

We must understand that many residents in at-risk neighborhoods especially will be hesitant naturally regardless of whom you choose but to have long term success it is vital to get a team of individuals willing to learn and educate them on the needed resources not just make them available. We need to open up more cannabis industry-specific training program similar to what ConnCat did in New Haven. I think some states are innovative and cutting edge because if you look and research many nations and their regulations they never address the money aspect of cannabis entry especially for at-risk minorities many coming from generation of those suffering through single housed mothers, imprisoned fathers, lost siblings an overcrowded living situation (I.e. urban complex housing aka projects). The states never address how is a poor inner-city kid who is their target, is going to manage to pay student loan debt, manage a family, work while also trying to pay the State's initial application fee which is beyond his financial reach for various reasons.

We need to cut the red tape and ensure that a limit I put on how many individuals that are not community stakeholders can own businesses, especially in affected areas. We must remember while evaluating this bill the history of Alcohol when it was prohibited and its path toward legalization. I don't have time to discuss it here, but when it was transitioning from medical to recreational, it left a lot of actual stakeholders stuck being consumers forever reaping the consequences of Alcohol (i.e., live damage) never any benefits. However, now many years later the real stakeholders of Alcohol are excluded and will forever be consumers never owners to suffer the consequences never to reap the benefits.

However, this group needs to have the heart and patience of a teacher as well maintain the perspective of treating ailments that many residents suffer from daily but instead they have to suffer from these ailments many of them for years. The committee or commission to address community projects to help repair the wrong done for years is a critical step to get buy-in from the early adopters of the community leaders which would go a long way in building community trust

Lastly, as I know my time is short, I want to address why I think it should be allowed for all patients as well as my hope and dream regarding the legalization of Cannabis in the State of CT. So to finish up this letter which faith will be accepted as intended is to share my opinion of Cannabis from the eyes of the most valuable person in this equation, the patient and their families that depend on them and every day.

As one patient told me "thank you, I have been able to sleep 6 hours which is something that I haven't been able to do in years". Alternatively, another suffering from long-standing chronic neck, shoulder and back pain and after having had many surgeries often leaving him in more pain after trying Cannabis he stated that he was able to stay in one place longer than 30 minutes without excruciating pain". Or many of my psychosocial patients many who suffer in isolation with anxiety, depression, and fear are often able to engage with their loved ones or share more during their cognitive behavioral therapy sessions or Talk Therapy Groups or go periods or time and not think about their perpetrators who was achieved after being in the Medical Marijuana Program.

However, what concerns me is the lack of access to cannabis certification for patients of all colors and socioeconomic status or ability to pay. As it stands right now since marijuana is still considered Schedule 1 which would make it worse than heroin which makes no sense. This lack of regulation and the fact that visits are not covered by insurance so a Certified Cannabis Practitioner (many whom are not) can charge whatever they want in specific allowable range' (think 300 dollars). So I figured out the problem which is why many patients asked me about being certified (which gives you protection from the law-which is enormous especially for at-risk populations)

because many are charging them the max 200-300 or 150 if you meet a particular requirement which was a bottleneck. So I met with my team at our month Patient Experience meeting and discussed ways to give patient valuable, affordable care they need in a way that makes sense for the patients. So I obtained more education from the Institute of Cannabis Education for providers, and we created the Emerald Wellness Initiative. The Emerald Initiative aim is to have a group composed of local doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, medical assistant, business owners, dietitian, exercise instructors to invest and pool our resources and influence to be able to offer every patient in the State of CT regardless of their ability to pay. We maintain the lowest price in the State until legalized which I think now is currently 125 dollars (with a guaranteed refund if you do not qualify for a card). We did this because our hope is through cooperation, compassion, collaboration, and love for one another we can overcome any challenge we face but we are stronger together than we are divided. So we started with the Emerald Visit which is a cannabis assessment, and evaluation not only for certification but to address any issues or question you may have regarding Cannabis (safety, pharmacodynamics, pharmacotherapeutics, and safe consumption) and every patient leaves with this information.

We selected Waterbury as our initial home base as we told the local representative from the Mayor office because they deserve it after being counted out so long as well as the current epidemic, so we thought what better way to have a positive impact and boy did it. Now my hope and dream regarding cannabis legalization are not just to increase accessibility, which I do think is critical but so patients don't have to decide between getting certified and feeding her kids, which is not fair. A day when it is equitable, accessible and affordable to those whom it is applicable and who wish to give it a try to improve their health and wellness. Passage of Recreational Marijuana will help those individuals, but also it would help us as medical providers provide the time needed care to acute care issues which being addressed mainly by Emergency Department due to lack of space in the schedule for chronic management flare up and questions.

I think it is excellent that all Connecticut residents regardless of the source of their Cannabis will feel safe under the law but believe their needs to be a system to study the negative financial impact on communities many of which are surviving by an illegal market. Also, legalization would help the single moms and minorities as well as business people not have to fear to lose their job for taking their medicine at home at night no more than the patient with chronic pain that we prescribe Percocet or recommend physical therapy. Also to give kids from those at-risk neighborhoods hope which is vital growing up where they grow up where parents and individuals are faced with tough decisions daily.

Moreover, it all starts with all the great work that my colleagues in the

cannabis industry, Institute of Cannabis Education. NORML with this bill and the proposed additions and inclusion in the law which includes the critical factor of representation because they must see themselves in us which is a tremendous honor and responsibility to continue in the global effort to legalize Cannabis, not for consumption but so we can study it for all its most genuine potential. So please accept this letter as support of cannabis regulation and bill \_\_\_\_\_

I submit this letter humbly and respectfully,

Sincerely,

Brandon D. Pervis Sr. MSN, FNP-C, CNML

VP of Business Development (The Lifestyle Group )

Co-owner of Never Stop Learning Center for Primary Care LLC

Emerald Wellness Board member

Florence Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing