

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, are united in our belief that the Washington State Legislature should pass a bill to protect the rights of medical cannabis patients and ensure safe, affordable access to products deemed beneficial by licensed health care professionals.

We support any legislation that builds on the current rights granted to patients and adopts the following key principles:

1. Patients must maintain the ability to possess and cultivate a 60-day supply as previously defined by the Department of Health.
2. Patient rights to participate in small, private non-commercial cooperatives must be preserved with clear guidelines for policy adherence.
3. Patients and providers must retain the affirmative defense granted under current law.
4. The state must provide a licensing and regulatory framework that permits commercial production, processing and distribution of medical cannabis outside of I-502 outlets, including:
 - a) Method for existing medical marijuana businesses to continue offering uninterrupted care to patients
 - b) Robust regulations related to minors, diversion, marketing, labeling and product testing to meet federal guidelines and enhance quality standards
 - c) Industry-driven funding source to absorb the cost of regulatory oversight
5. As a botanical medicine recognized by the American Herbal Pharmacopoeia and in line with RCW 82.08.0283¹ and RCW 82.08.925², medical cannabis should not be subject to excise, sales or use taxes. If revenue is needed to fund agency oversight, a series of reasonable licensing fees for commerce would be suitable, provided that a specified portion is reserved for cities and counties to cover administrative overhead.
6. Health care professionals must maintain the flexibility to adapt treatment plans to suit individual patient needs. Further restricting the practice of medicine, including defining specific diagnosis criteria, is burdensome and could cause unintended consequences.
7. Concerns about cost, patient privacy, discrimination, federal compliance and other complexities necessitate in-depth study by a dedicated workgroup of knowledgeable stakeholders before any action is taken to establish a patient registry.
8. Civil rights protections granted for pharmaceutical use should be extended to medical cannabis patients, particularly where housing, court supervision and employment are concerned. Additionally, organ transplant language must be modified to ensure recipients can no longer be turned away solely due to cannabis therapy. Evolving science also supports listing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a qualifying condition for medical cannabis treatment.

¹ Tax exemption for “medicines of mineral, animal and botanical origin prescribed, administered, dispensed or used in the treatment of an individual by a person licensed under 18.36A RCW.”

² Tax exemption for “dietary supplements for human use dispensed or to be dispensed to patients” as defined in RCW 82.08.0293.

We respectfully ask the legislature to utilize Senate Bill 5073 (2011) as a model for new legislation. The decentralized medical marijuana distribution system that exists today is the result of Governor Christine Gregoire's sectional veto of vital portions of SB 5073. Much has changed since then, including the passage of Initiative 502 and the issuance of a new policy memo by United States Deputy Attorney General James Cole. The eyes of the world are on Washington and Colorado, eager to see how we reconcile the prevailing medical marketplace with an emerging recreational system. Join with the thousands of patients, caregivers, medical professionals, legal and academic scholars, researchers, business owners and advocates who want to see two thriving markets exist side-by-side. Please honor the will of voters who passed Initiative 692 in 1998 by strengthening Washington's laws surrounding the compassionate use of cannabis.

Organizations

Americans for Safe Access
Sensible Washington
Northwest Patient Resource Center
Dockside Co-op
Herban Legends
Solstice Cooperative
Green Lion Farms
Center for Palliative Care
Purple Poppy Group
Cannabis Basics
Tetra Labs
CannaTest
CannaNexus
LeBlanc CNE
Team Dream Cream
New Leaf Enterprises -
WA State CBD Donation Program

Coalition for Cannabis Standards and Ethics
Center for the Study of Cannabis and Social Policy
NORML Women's Alliance of Washington
Washington Bud Company
Green Cross Patient Cooperative
Seattle Medical Marijuana Association
Association of Cannabis Breeders and Growers
Washington Marijuana Businesses
Seattle Quality Collective
Spotted Owl Organics
Green Cylinder Labs
Cannabis Research Collective
Dunshee Medical
Pacific Northwest Medical
Cannabis Outreach Services
Spokane Cannabis Association

Individuals

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