

FFC NEWS

NEWSLETTER | JULY 2015



AMENDMENT UPDATE

United for Care on track to put medical marijuana initiative on 2016 ballot

BY BIANCA A GARZA

AN EMAIL MESSAGE WITH THE subject line “Petition News: We’re getting super close,” from Raymer Maguire, the deputy campaign manager of United for Care, explained just how close the medical marijuana campaign is to its first goal and ultimate goal. The July 7 email went on to say United for Care is only 5,000 petitions away from being able to submit a request for Supreme Court review. This means the organization is about 10 percent of the way toward having the total needed to be placed on the ballot.

Ten percent may not sound very high, but considering that United for Care has about another seven months to complete the task at hand and that it has completed this same task with significantly less time and resources for the 2014 vote, the organization is considered well on track for success.

According to Ben Pollara, campaign manager, regarding who collected the signatures, “The volunteers have done most of the heavy lifting.” Recently United for Care hired a company that will hire professional petition collectors. They will ensure that the required num-

The volunteers have done most of the heavy lifting.

ber of petitions are turned in on time.

According to United for Care, the sick and suffering people of Florida rely on the commitment of volunteers to see safe, legal access to medical marijuana become law. “We now have 12 people on staff, which is five more than we had a month ago,” said Vanessa Moffatt, operations director. “But there are over 13,000 volunteers throughout the state. If we didn’t have these people who care enough to spend their free time collecting signatures, then we would not be as far along as we currently are.”

This is true in more than one way. According to Pollara, every petition voluntarily turned in saves the campaign about \$3. The ultimate goal is to turn in the needed number of petitions on time, but to do it as cost effectively as possible.

With new organizers around the state and more to come, United for Care plans to have booths set up at food events,



Next step is ballot language review by the Florida Supreme Court.

JEFF BORG

music festivals, art shows, marathons, sporting events, etc., to collect petitions. Moffatt stated, “We have a North Florida and a South Florida field director who will have organizers reporting to them to lead the volunteers at coordinated events. The key is obtaining entrance to these events for little to no cost.”

Regarding the fees associated with large festivals, it could easily cost \$500 for a weekend of petitioning. However, United for Care has another way it's trying to balance its budget: an online store. During last year’s campaign, the organization did not sell T-shirts or merchandise. Its T-shirts were reserved for volunteers, supporters, and contestants.

“This year we have the time and resources to set up an online store. We are going to start with a small quantity of T-shirts and see how it goes, but I am hopeful this will generate some income,” said Pollara. With new organizing plans, income strategies, a huge force of committed volunteers, and time on its side, United for Care has the ingredients for success in this phase of the campaign. ■

Bianca A Garza is director of communications and external affairs of Florida for Care.

Why I'm quitting Tallahassee.

Recently, another legislative session ended without action on medical marijuana, despite the 58% majority who voted for it last fall.

And I'm disappointed, but relieved.

Since the 2014 elections, we devoted ourselves to lobbying the legislature on an issue for which the will of the people is irrelevant. This legislature doesn't work for the people and is intent to let hundreds of thousands suffer by their inaction.

Maybe there wasn't enough money in it. Not enough lobbyists.

People were depending on us and we failed them. People sick and dying and in pain every day. Tallahassee failed them.

And when the Florida House simply decided to quit, I realized, here was our chance to truly help those people, and allow them to see the relief that those in nearly half of the country already has.

So as of the end of session, we are recommitted to putting medical marijuana back before the voters in 2016. We know it's going to be hard. But we will win this time.

If you're interested in continuing to lobby Tallahassee on this issue, here's a list of firms who will gladly do it: the Rubin Group, Ballard Partners, Southern Strategies and Ron. L. Book, P.A..

As for us, we welcome a vote in November 2016. If you do too, sign the petition at www.unitedforcare.org/petition.

Sincerely,

Ben Pollara
Campaign Manager
United for Care

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Tallahassee fails us again; voters won't

BY BEN POLLARA

IT'S BEEN ABOUT TWO MONTHS SINCE the legislation ended. Excuse me, it's been about two months since our elected officials quit early. I was hopeful. I was hopeful the people whom we put in place would act upon the will of the people. I was hopeful they would follow gentlemen like Sen. Jeff Brandes.

Now, I've never considered myself a naïve person, but wow. They shocked the hell out of me! Not only did these "public servants" refuse to act upon the will of 3 million voters but also they simply chose not to show up for work.

Well, guess what, folks? I show up for work every day and so does the United for Care team led by Chairman John Morgan. We hit the ground running as soon as we heard the news, and we've made tremendous steps in attaining our ultimate goal of this phase: getting on the ballot for the 2016 presidential vote.

By writing a large check in June, John Morgan has kept his promise to fight until the people of Florida have safe, legal access to medical marijuana. John's check has enabled us to hire organizing staff and a petitioning agency. This is a great start to what's going to be, I believe, a long and arduous battle.

However, long may also be a blessing considering that at this point in our last initiative, we were just beginning to collect signatures. Currently, we are gearing up to send 100,000 signatures already collected to the supervisor of elections to qualify for Florida Supreme Court review.

We now have staff in Tampa Bay, Orlando, Gainesville, and throughout South Florida. This organizing staff is going to coordinate our very important volunteer effort. Another fact in our favor is the already-established volunteer base.



Pollara

JEFF BORG

Check out the ad on the facing page. We're placing it in a magazine widely read by Tallahassee politicians and insiders.

We have over 13,000 people signed up to volunteer. The volunteer effort is very important as every petition voluntarily turned in saves us about \$3.

We've been very busy getting to this point, and I look forward to seeing it through to the end. But we cannot and will not be successful without every little bit of help from supporters. Money, time, resources: These are the things needed to help hundreds of thousands of people find relief in Florida. ■

Ben Pollara is executive director of Florida for Care.



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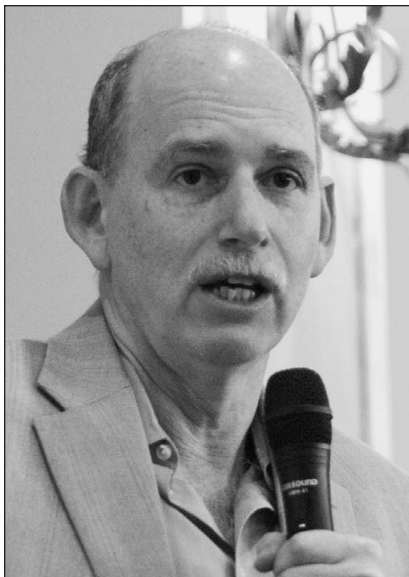
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JEFF BORG

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Experts cover session, ballot, new industry

BY JEFF BORG

LEADERS GATHERED FEBRUARY 26–27 at the Westin Colonnade in Coral Gables for their 2015 Legislative Policy Conference. They made plans for the 2015 legislative session, a 2016 constitutional amendment if needed, and the new medical marijuana industry already forming.

Jeff Kottkamp, lieutenant governor from 2007 to 2011, gave the morning's keynote address. "We're not starting over," he said about this year's legislative effort, "we're building on a foundation. If Republicans want to win the White House, they've got to win Florida. They don't want [a constitutional amendment] on the ballot. There are political realities."

Dan Rogers, *Florida for Care's* director of legislative affairs, discussed plans for this year's session in Tallahassee. He spoke about details in proposed bills, such as bonds, inventory controls, transportation restrictions, and waiting periods. While there was no waiting period for strong, potentially dangerous pills like Dilaudid — a schedule II controlled opioid — some legislators were demanding a 90-day waiting period for marijuana.

Moe Afaneh, chief operating officer of BioTrackTHC, discussed best practices for seed-to-sale tracking and transparency. With his specialized inventory software, each seed, plant, processed product, etc. gets a serial number.

BioTrackTHC contracts with several states, integrating via application program interfaces and adapting to each regulatory ripple in various jurisdictions. Bank regulators and compliance officers

want to account for every transaction, even those by cash. He said that Washington State was working with BioTrackTHC and wanted fifty different reports.

Ethan Nadelmann, executive director of Drug Policy Alliance, delivered the afternoon keynote. He focused on the objectives for legal medical marijuana: reducing penalties, reducing arrests, ending marijuana prohibition. He said the District of Columbia was the first jurisdiction in which racial justice was pivotal. In polls there, both black and white responders cited racial justice.

DPA's work was based on civil liberties, he said. During the campaigns in Oregon and Alaska, most of the money came from people not invested in the industry. "Don't be in this just for the money," he implored. "Support this because we want to live in a better society." Nadelmann lamented an Ohio constitutional initiative drafted by 10 business interests in which only those 10 actors could be in the business.

He discussed other states and countries. "The one I love now is Utah. Utah!" He described that state's process as, "Mormon Republican state senators with Mormon patients testifying."

He gave props to President Barack Obama for moving toward the future even without congressional action. It would help to move the substance to Schedule II. But Schedule III? That might invite a backlash from the Right.

Susan Trevarthen, a Broward attorney in municipal land use and zoning, discussed local regulation of medical marijuana. She is the author of "Best Practices in First Amendment Land Use Regulation" in *Planning & Environmental Law* and has spoken and written extensively on planning and regulatory issues with First Amendment implications.

She has drafted and defended local government regulations and development decisions affecting sensitive land uses and has advised municipalities on medical marijuana uses in Florida. ■

Jeff Borg is the editor of FFC News.

From top left: Jeff Kottkamp, former lieutenant governor, discussed the politics. Ethan Nadelmann, of Drug Policy Alliance, asked, "Don't be in this just for the money, support this because we want to live in a better society." Moe Afaneh, of BioTrackTHC, laid out some software solutions for seed-to-sale tracking.

NEWS BRIEFS | BY BIANCA A GARCIA



Governor Alejandro García Padilla allows medical marijuana in Puerto Rico.

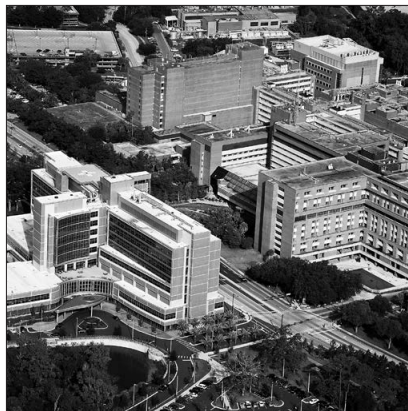
Medical marijuana implemented by executive order in Puerto Rico

ON SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2015, PUERTO Rico's governor, Alejandro García Padilla, signed an executive order to legalize the use of medical marijuana in the US territory. The order went into effect immediately, but the logistics are still to be determined.

The order directs the health department to authorize the use of some or all controlled substances or derivatives of the cannabis plant for medical use.

García Padilla said the government will also outline the specific authorized uses of marijuana and its derivatives for medical purpose.

"We're taking a significant step in the area of health that is fundamental to our development and quality of life," García Padilla said in a statement. "I am sure that many patients will receive appropriate treatment that will offer them new hope."



UF leading state-funded marijuana research

JUST BEFORE MEMORIAL WEEKEND, the Florida Department of Health announced its approval of \$1 million for a team led by UF Health Shands pediatric neurologist Dr. Paul Carney to treat up to 50 children who have drug-resistant epilepsy with a minimal-THC-content, cannabidiols-rich, oral solution called Epidiolex.

The three-year study will look at how effective the drug is at controlling seizures and its effects on cognitive development, learning, behavior, quality of life, and family interaction.

The UF College of Pharmacy is in talks with the DoH to complete an agreement to develop a database registry of patients and providers and a safety system that will include info such as treatment plans. Right now, the estimated cost to the state to contract with the College of Pharmacy is \$1.2 million a year, based on a projection that there will be 1,000 to 4,000 patients. Miami Children's Hospital is one of several hospitals also participating in the UF-led study.

Medical marijuana delivery to begin

POT IS THE NEW FRONTIER IN MANY industries. Now, some states are adding delivery drivers as the newest service. SideCar, which currently transports everything from groceries and flowers

Epidiolex will be studied with pediatric epilepsy patients at the University of Florida's Shands hospitals, in Gainesville.

to power tools in several major US cities, is officially adding medical marijuana to that lineup.

SideCar has been adamant about making sure the state of California knows it will only be working with licensed dispensa-

Sidecar

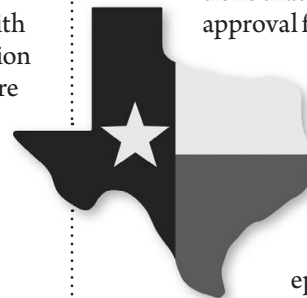
ries. It will not be delivering medical food items and will always make sure the delivery goes to the licensed patient who made the order. In addition to following the laws to a T, SideCar says it wants to make sure that the public is aware of its customer service.

It intends to keep delivery prices low and have the product delivered within an hour of ordering from a local center.

Texas governor signs medical marijuana law

TEXAS GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT signed a bill (SB 339) on June 1 that gives patients limited access to a specific type of medical marijuana. The law authorizes only an oil form of the high-CBD strain.

It requires that epileptic patients first try two other forms of epilepsy medications that fail and then obtain approval from two doctors



before gaining access to the oil. In a press release, the governor wrote, "There is currently no cure

for intractable epilepsy and many patients have had little

to no success with currently approved drugs. However, we have seen promising results from CBD oil testing and with the passage of this legislation, there is now hope for thousands of families who deal with the effects of intractable epilepsy every day." ■

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Veterans medical marijuana amendment in US House loses by just three votes

BY BILL PIPER

THERE ARE REASONS TO BE OPTIMISTIC about a vote in Congress that didn't go our way.

In May, the US House voted down a bipartisan amendment by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) and Rep. Joe Heck (R-Nev.) that would have allowed Veterans Administration doctors to recommend marijuana to their patients.

The House rejected a similar amendment last year. It received 195 votes; 222 voted against it. Last night, 210 members of Congress voted for it, and only 213 voted against it.

That's a 15-vote pick up — in a Congress far more conservative than last year.

Two votes would have made a big difference. One Democrat voted no when he meant to vote yes. One Republican voted no because the amendment didn't go far enough.

Despite the setback on the veterans amendment last year, we went on to win five other marijuana votes in 2014. Those votes were more focused on letting states set their own marijuana policy.

The fact that this year's amendment



Piper

picked up 15 votes in just one year means support for medical marijuana is increasing rapidly in Congress. It also means we will most likely go on to win other amendments this year that are more focused on states' rights.

The amendment was a complicated one that went beyond merely allowing states to set their own marijuana policy. It allowed federal employees at the VA to discuss marijuana with their patients

and recommend its use if medically necessary. Under the laws of almost two dozens states, a doctor's recommendation to use marijuana exempts a patient from local or state arrest.

While the Blumenauer/Heck amendment would have treated veterans like any other resident in a medical marijuana state, our opponents framed it as being about allowing federal employees to break the law or facilitate the breaking of law, even though it was clearly about free speech and the right of doctors to provide accurate information to their patients. In some cases opponents of medical marijuana outright lied, saying that it would allow federal doctors to distribute marijuana, allow marijuana use on federal property, etc.

Don't get me wrong, this is a major loss for veterans. There's no sugar-coating that. As a letter to Congress from a former VA physician pointed out, "Our men and women in uniform make incredible sacrifices for our country, and the least we could do is make every possible treatment option available to them when they come home."

However, we see substantial momentum toward making change for veterans and medical marijuana patients, alike. We have a road map for bipartisan marijuana reform and will be pushing forward more aggressively, and on more fronts, than ever before. ■

Bill Piper is the director of national affairs for the Drug Policy Alliance.



LEGISLATIVE ACTION

No surrender in fight for medical marijuana*

BY JOHN B MORGAN

SOMETHING UNPRECEDENTED happened in Tallahassee in April. The Florida House of Representatives quit three days early. They just threw up their hands and stopped working. I'm incredulous, but maybe I shouldn't be.

These are the same people who, for years, refused even to give a hearing to medical marijuana legislation in Florida. These are the same people who then, once medical marijuana was on the ballot, had the gall to say it should be passed legislatively, rather than by constitutional amendment. These are the same people who, staring down a ballot measure, finally passed what they call a "medical marijuana law" but wrote it so hastily that a year later it still hasn't been implemented.

Anyone who knows me knows two things about me: I keep my word, and I never quit. It is simply not who I am. It is not who I raised my kids to be. I've recently become a grandfather, and it is not who I want my grandson to be.

I am going to keep my word and push to pass a medical marijuana law that helps sick and suffering Floridians. And I am not going to quit until that happens.

I took up this cause for my brother, who has spent his entire adult life in a wheelchair, in severe pain, and who only has a normal life because of medical marijuana. But medical marijuana quickly became an issue that is larger than my family. It's about all of our families.

When I first became a public advocate for medical marijuana, people immediately started telling me their stories. A father whose 8-year-old daughter has hundreds of seizures a day, and none of the drugs work. A mother who is stricken with cancer but doesn't want to try marijuana to relieve her suffering because



RIKUHANNA

Morgan

she's afraid she might get arrested and lose her children. A wife, given a death sentence by an ALS diagnosis, who is still alive nearly three decades later because her husband grows and administers marijuana for her illegally.

THOSE ARE THE STORIES OF THE present, of people who need this law right now. But this is just as much for me about the future. Like me, everyone deserves an opportunity to give their children and grandchildren a better life than we had. Our children and grandchildren deserve the ability to live in a state where they can have safe, reliable access to medical marijuana should their doctors recommend its use.

I have to believe the politicians in Tallahassee were not thinking about this like I do, through the lens of family, because if they were, passing a sensible medical marijuana law would have been a no-brainer.

I cannot believe they call this working. If my kids showed this kind of work ethic in school, they would have been grounded. And guess what? I would have drug-tested them, too. I run a big law firm, with hundreds of employees.

Compassion is coming to the great state of Florida, as it has in 23 other states plus Washington, DC. I plan to lead this march to victory as long as it takes.

If someone who worked for me said to me on Tuesday that they weren't showing up for work Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, I'd tell them not to come back Monday.

There are a few courageous Republican and Democratic legislators who tried valiantly to bring compassion to Florida. Unfortunately, in Tallahassee, the pharmaceutical industry and the special interests are proving to be more powerful than the people.

The people don't have a vote in Tallahassee, but they do have a vote in November 2016. Medical marijuana will be back on the ballot, and we will get the law we deserve.

Compassion is coming to the great state of Florida, as it has in 23 other states plus Washington, DC. I plan to lead this march to victory as long as it takes.

Last fall we almost won. Nearly 3.4 million Floridians voted "yes" for medical marijuana, totaling 58 percent of the vote in favor. That's usually a win. Medical marijuana received a half-million more votes than Rick Scott and more than any other elected official on the ballot. This time around, we will not only win a broad majority. We will win a majority larger than 60 percent, and medical marijuana will become the law of the land.

Politicians in Tallahassee may not want to work. So be it. We will do their work for them. We will do their work, for the people, for the patients, for our families. ■

John B Morgan is managing partner of Morgan & Morgan and chairman of the advocacy group United for Care.

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FLORIDA FOR CARE

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MAKE IT HAPPEN

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Access events, strategy sessions, and calls as listed
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Membership benefits

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Vote in annual elections

Access online member portal

Join conference calls with special guests

Get email, policy, and regulatory updates

Get political representation

Attend networking events

Get member discounts

Get elevated name recognition

Use FFC member seal in promotional materials

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
 IN FULL BY MARCH 1, 2015
 OR DOWN/MONTHLY

	FFC ONLINE	BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER	SEMIANNUAL CONFERENCE	BREAKFASTS/ LUNCHESES	NETWORK EVENTS	CONFERENCE CALLS	EMAIL UPDATES	FOUNDERS CLUB MEETS
General member (GM) \$1,500 or \$250 / \$100/mo.	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	2	Monthly	Biweekly	
Elite member (EM) \$5,000 or \$1,400 / \$300/mo.	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	4	Monthly	Biweekly	
Leaders Council (LC) \$10,000 or \$1,600 / \$700/mo.	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	6	Monthly	Weekly	1
Founders Club (FC) \$25,000 or \$7,000 / \$1,500/mo.	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	12	Biweekly	Weekly	3
Legion of Legacy (LL) \$40,000 or \$16,000 / \$2,000/mo.	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	12	Weekly	Daily	6
Executive Board (EB) \$100,000 or \$28,000 / \$6,000/mo.	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	12	Weekly	Daily	6

Founders Club, Legion of Legacy, and Executive Board members receive admission with a guest to all events, calls with campaign leaders, and other benefits.

Join at www.floridaforcare.org/contribute

Contact Eric Stevens at eric@floridaforcare.org
with questions on how to get involved.



The logo for Florida for Care features the word "FLORIDA" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. A heart shape is formed by the negative space between the letters 'O' and 'R'. Below "FLORIDA" is the phrase "FOR CARE" in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font.