

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support of and advocating for the legalization of medical marijuana.

It appears that on this particular topic the state of Kansas is woefully wedged between archaic thinking and insidious, insensitivity to the needs of families. It seems that somehow the opposition to legalizing medical marijuana deems it a danger to society, or unnecessary as there are other similar options available for use. Not true.

I have heard it said that there is not yet enough research to support the efficacy and safety of using medical marijuana. Yet, we are suspended on our path to progressive caring and treatment, because we will not allow its use so we can conduct the research. With the advice of their physicians, and weighing all options, let the families decide the best path of treatment. Are there potential, harmful side effects; most definitely, as there are with any other drug. If we stopped to read the side effects of many medications no one in their right mind would take most of them. But as individuals we do a cost/benefit analysis and determine if the potential benefits outweigh the potential harm.

As a state we proudly tout our values and one of those, as mentioned by the governor in his state of the state address, is the family as a foundational core of our existence. It seems uncaring and a dismal display of ineptitude that one simple legislative act, that could have a phenomenal impact on so many families is in dispute. Currently we have families being torn apart because they have to move to other states to get the medical intervention, essential for treatment and relief. In all personal situations that I know of, it is not the first route but often the last resort and hope. So, those who most need our support, those most vulnerable in their needs, are the ones we shun. For one little toddler, who has yet to toddle because his brain is plagued by hundreds of seizures a day, it is a last resort, before removing a large portion of his brain.

My hope is that this committee, would all get to hold him on their lap, and feel his little body tremor and shake with very limited relief; that you would look him in the eyes and never have him focus on you or anything else because his seizures do not allow him the luxury of eye contact. He does not get to utter the words, "mommy, daddy, or I love you too."

I hope that as you hold one of your children or grandchildren and look into their eyes and feel the blessing that only comes when you're holding your heartstring, you realize you are also holding in your political hands, that gift for other parents and grandparents. Currently moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas are going without this blessing because we are a state that only truly cares about the family, when it is politically convenient.

Please yield to reason and respond to the desperate need of some of your most vulnerable constituents. Take action instead of reacting. Be responsibly progressive. I believe that if your child's health and well-being were in question, and you knew that medical marijuana provided hope, we wouldn't even be having this conversation. Do not take for granted that you can look your child in the eyes, smile and have them smile back. Recognize that not all parents and grandparents are afforded this blessing, until you give them the possibility.

Respectfully and hopefully submitted,

Amy L. Wintermantel  
Proud Republican