The misclassification and demonization of marijuana by the federal government has for decades prevented knowledge and research from being achieved. Recent studies have demonstrated the vast efficiency of medical marijuana in treating a wide variety of illnesses, particularly epilepsy.

Tens of thousands of Kansas citizens continue to suffer devastating side effects of powerful psychoactive drugs developed by the pharmaceutical industry. In many of these cases, these drugs have no positive effects on those conditions they are prescribed to treat. Instead, these powerful drugs often result in the further debilitation of patients they are intended to "treat"

This is exactly what happened to our 5 year old son, Gavin.

Gavin was a normal toddler up to age three. He knew his shapes, colors, sounds. He loved sports, and was a very happy little boy. That's when Epilepsy came from nowhere. The first seizure came just after his third birthday. I thought he was choking. I had never seen a grand mal seizure. At first we hoped it was a fluke. Six weeks went by, another seizure, every week that passed his seizures became more frequent. In the beginning he was having Grand Mal seizures. Then his neurologists decided to medicate him he was three and a half. That was when it all spiraled into the seizure "abyss" as I call it now. With every anti seixure medication, came more seizures. Different seizures began to appear. With every medication Gavin deteriorated further. Even "rescue" meds caused more seizures. At age four after several anti-seizure meds.. came the head drops. Doctors continued to add medications, but the seizures were more intense by the day. Then we got the official diagnosis. Myocolonic Astaticic epilepsy.This diagnosis meant that Gavin was having seizure activity all over his brain. Gavin has five different types of seizures. The worst for me, as a mother is head drops. They come with no warning, and no way for us to protect him. No matter where he was when the drops occurred, injury was almost inevitable. In January he had a head drop in front of a table. He knocked one front tooth out from the root. The three next to that tooth were pushed up so far in his gums that it took three months for them to come back in. Gavin was prescribed a helmet and we were told he was no longer to ride a bike, skate, swim or even play on a playground. We have four boys total, and all of them have suffered as a result of Gavin's epilepsy. 50% of people with this type of epilepsy cannot be treated with AED's. 30% will experience seizure aggravation. Around 10% of those cases will be completely uncontrolled and some will become severely retarded. Around 8% will suffer that consequence as a direct result of AED's. Gavin experienced side effects from pharmaceuticals such as, night terrors, psychosis, rage, stomach ache, headache. change in personality, tremors, loss and lack of cognitive function, inability to learn, loss of coordination, fear, anxiety, confusion, drooling, and more. In May 2014 we were admitted to Children's Mercy after his rescue medicine once again failed to stop him from seizing. Doctors gave him what they called, a "loaded" dose of anti-seizure medication. When we took him to the hospital he was having 20 to 30 seizures a day. Four days in the hospital and 6 different anti-seizure meds were pumped in to his little body. He was released having over 200 seizures a day. He was in a state of status ellepiticus. He couldn't walk or talk. The only thing he could to was lay on the couch and seize. My husband and I were devastated. We truly thought Gavin was going to die. He had seen seven neurologists, Epileptologist, epilepsy specialty clinics, nutritionists and countless AED's. They all failed him. We made the decision to take Gavin to a D.O. in Missouri who agreed that he was suffering severe seizure aggravation as a result of the AED's prescribed to help him. His suggestion, move to a State where we could try Medical Marijuana and wean him off AED's. It took us several months of weaning his AED's and lots of prayer and battles throughout. He is regaining his cognitive function, however learning is severely stunted by seizure interruption. Gavin is now in half day Kindergarten and still suffering anywhere from 10 to 50+

seizures a day. We have him in a full faceplate helmet. He is very restricted on activities due to risk of injury. I have been a Kansas resident my entire life. We are young average Kansas family with four boys. We don't have the means to move to a medical marijuana state. Its a terrible burden to bare to know that in half the country my son and others like him can be saved by a natural non-psychoactive plant. To know that at any time he could again, have hundreds of seizures a day is the most terrifying thought. To know that one head drop could end his life and there is no way for us to protect him....and there is hope we cannot obtain, simply because of where we live. The research is in. People from all walks of life are being cured and relieved of pain and given a quality shot at life thanks to this miracle plant and its endless medicinal properties. A natural option that should be a basic fundamental right. My son deserves to have a healthy normal life. He deserves to live his life free of dangerous and addictive pharmaceutical medicines. My family urges the right decision be made by Kansas law makers. We pray action be taken immediately in hopes that we will be granted the ability to save our Gavin.

Thank you for the time and concern in this matter. We hope it is seen as a matter of urgency.

Sincerely,

Melissa and Brandon Ragsdale

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