

Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
Regarding Bill SB 135  
March 16, 2023

Chair Thompson and members of the committee,

I am a Kansas citizen, writing this to make my voice heard in the opposition of Bill SB 135. I do not want marijuana legalized for any purpose, including for medical purposes. I believe by making marijuana out to be a “safe” drug for medical reasons, only opens the door for devastation here in Kansas. There are better options for medical drugs which can be better regulated, and not fall as easily into the hands of people, especially teens, who simply want to get high.

My personal story that hits closest to home is the one with the father of my 10-year-old daughter. I will call him Joe. Joe struggled with addiction to recreational drugs since he was 14 years old. He started out using marijuana, smoking it with his friends in the small town he grew up in here in Kansas. Joe was kicked out of high school due to a drop in his motivation, resulting in failed classes, and an increase in his temper, resulting in fights at school. Joe simply gave up on his education. He began working in construction, and then got a job staining cabinets at a local cabinet shop. Joe still used marijuana, which was the highlight of his day. In time, the marijuana caused him to desire a stronger high, especially with the constant fumes he inhaled at work, spraying stain on the cabinets.

Needless to say, Joe easily found something stronger in town, Joe found meth. Joe’s life became a rollercoaster that was created by the highs and lows of his drug addiction. Joe’s friends and family kept telling him to just smoke marijuana, since it is a “safer” drug than meth. Joe kept trying this, but marijuana was a gateway drug for Joe, only leading him to stronger drugs. Joe came from a bloodline on both sides of his family that struggled with addiction. Nobody understood the dangers that marijuana brought to Joe’s life.

I met Joe after he had spent a year in jail for his fourth DUI and possession of marijuana. He was clean and sober and was doing great. It took jail to get him the help he needed with his drug addiction and to keep him away from his access to the drugs. Joe and I had almost two years of him being clean and sober, and we had a great relationship. Then, one day, Joe did a

side job with some buddies. One of his buddies brought some marijuana to smoke after they finished. Sadly, Joe joined in, and that was the restart of his rollercoaster. I tried desperately to get Joe to be the man I fell in love with, but soon he fell back into meth. The years to come were full of active addiction then recovery, on repeat. I spent 10 years in this battle with the drug world, trying to “save” Joe. He and I had a daughter during this time as well. Unfortunately, my daughter and I had to leave Joe, and she is growing up without her dad. Joe still uses marijuana and meth to this day.

Please do not legalize medical marijuana. It will help nobody in the end and will only break up families and leave children in unfit homes or without a parent altogether. Marijuana also damages the brain so parents cannot be the parents and role models they should be for their children, and marijuana damages developing brains of children who are around the smoke, or even worse, who find it in the home and use it themselves. How is that making Kansas citizens, families, and children stronger and healthier?

I oppose SB 135 and encourage you to do the same. Thank you.

BD  
Kansas Citizen