

Patient Testimony/Proponent of SB9

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I was diagnosed at a young age with Crohn's. All throughout my life I have battled with the pain, nausea, flare ups, loss of appetite, and so on—I've dealt with this for 28 years. I would miss school a lot due to the nausea and excruciating pain. I was in the hospital for a month due to a flare up and dropping from 125lbs to 90lbs in a couple weeks, due to not eating. I had no appetite, as well as it hurt a lot when I ate. I still battle with these things to this day. Being on anti-nausea meds that don't really work, or pain meds that don't touch the pain most of the time isn't fun but I need them just to be able to do anything, which is still an uncertainty due to not having a lot of energy at times. I can't really hold down any job like this, go to college, or manage relationships; it is just hard to do when you are battling severe pain and nausea. The fact that I have to take pain meds just to eat so it doesn't hurt is a bit saddening to me. Having severe anxiety to taking pain meds also hampers when I take them, and when I take them I have severe panic attacks which can last for hours.

I tend to have at least one flare up a year and will drop from 150lbs to 90lbs in a couple weeks. Having something to help me eat and keep from losing that weight would be tremendous. Having something that would stop the nausea in its tracks so I can eat, hang out with my friends, see my family, and work, would be amazing. Just being able to work would be amazing since I can't really support myself without it. When you hurt too much to move, or to nauseated (moving makes it worse) to do anything you tend to live a miserable life and hope your family can support you. They get to see that upfront and see how hard that can be. Your friends even see that and have had to take me home or offer a room during those moments. I missed out on life moments and a lot of my life just by being affected by the symptoms of Crohn's and not really having anything that would bring relief or let me live a little more. I've had to drop out of college due to the flare ups, pain, and nausea - I just missed too much class due to my flare ups, pain, and nausea.

On top of all this I have arthritis (Rheumatoid Arthritis - diagnosed with that in fourth grade). So my joints are killing me almost all the time. I can't even imagine standing for 8 hours at a time some days. I also deal with chronic migraines which are extremely debilitating in its own right, and can heap more nausea at you.

I teach swing dancing when I can since it allows me to be able to set my own schedule and work the days I feel good enough to, which I can't do all the time when I am just hurting, nauseated, or having a

migraine. The pain meds can only do so much. Not to mention I have panic attacks when I take them, so I try to avoid taking them.

Having severe insomnia also affects life day to day. Being up for 2-3 days at a time just isn't healthy and makes it hard to do anything. This is sometimes caused by pain, but often it is due to my ADHD and anxiety that kicks in at night. When it's a running joke to see how long I've been awake among my friends, there is a serious issue. Insomnia meds just make me sluggish the whole next day and really lethargic, making anything hard to do. The crummy thing is if I take it more than 2 days in a row it no longer works.

Some relief to any of this would be appreciated, which from what I have learned and read about, cannabis brings. It would treat pretty much all my symptoms and then some. Since stress is one big factor to my flare ups and often triggers them, it would help there too, as well as the inflammation going on in my knees, hips, ankles, and colon. It would help with the pain, the nausea, give me an appetite when I am not hungry or hurting to much to eat. It would also bring relief to the severe anxiety that I face from the pain meds I take and give me another option to deal with it all. As well as help with my insomnia. This would help so many people with Crohn's, Ulcerative Colitis, IBD's, Rheumatoid Arthritis(any arthritis), cancer, or any chronic pain.

I've been thinking about moving to a state where medical cannabis is legal for the past year. It would be nice not to have to, since it would be so hard to start anew and leave all my family and friends behind. It's very gut wrenching to think about doing that, but kind of necessary just to live a better life.