

To whom it may concern,

My name is Erika Swafford. I'm a resident of Clearwater, KS, and I suffer from Epilepsy. I was thrilled when CBD oil became available, as I was able to attempt to treat my disease naturally, and stop my seizure medication; thus stopping the torture that the medications' side effects cause. While being medicated with numerous prescriptions, I was suffering migraines, teeth decay, memory loss, brain fog, and most of all seizures! With CBD oil, I have stopped having most of these issues, except I still have seizures. The reason for that is because CBD oil alone isn't enough to treat my epilepsy. I need access to the whole plant, and all of its life saving benefits! There are three main reasons I want Marijuana legalized and free to heal in Kansas, here they are:

1. I lost my father to prescription pills and the side effects from those medications. My dad was injured at work in 2001. He was burned over most of his body, with sulfuric acid. He suffered pain that was unimaginable. His injuries sustained and pain endured, led to a string of prescription drugs. Oxycontin, Dillata, Loritab, the list goes on and on. It got to the point that they prescribed him two scripts of loritabs, simply for breakthrough pain from his other medications, because they and I quote, "didn't have anything else to give him." He was patched up and pillaged, almost a walking zombie. I'm 100% sure, my dad would still be here, and would be functioning and enjoying that life, if he would've been afforded the opportunity to treat his pain with marijuana. His organs wouldn't have shriveled up and died at the hands of his medication, like they did. The 8 years he lived medicated, were not happy years. He simply existed, most of the time spent in and out of hospice. He could no longer drive to the store, he couldn't go to work, he couldn't be left unsupervised, because of the sheer amount of medication he was on. That was not a life. I wish he could've lived to see his 50th birthday. I wish he could've treated his pain with marijuana, instead of synthetic heroin. I wish he could've lived long enough, to see his baby girl finally be able to live seizure free, and able to treat her disease with marijuana.

2. I lost my father in law to SUDEP, Sudden death due to Epilepsy. He spent his entire life suffering seizures. He went through a handful of medications and finally settled with Dilantin, which still never stopped his seizures. He suffered his entire life battling this disease. He was so careful about taking his medications on time. Most people don't realize the importance of taking your medication right on time, and the detrimental effects that could happen if you don't. That's like being a prisoner to your medication. He was always on top of it though, down to the minute! I wish his careful following of his doctor's orders, would've been enough. He sadly lost his battle, and had a seizure and fell into the bathtub. My mother in law wasn't strong enough to pull him out in time, and when the ambulance got there he was gone. I think that my father in law could still be here with us today if he was allowed the opportunity to treat his disease with marijuana. He should've been afforded the rights to access to the entire plant. Whatever it may take to cure him, he should've been given the chance to try.

3. I don't want my son to suffer in the same way I have. I don't want him to lose a parent because of something that could have been avoided. I don't want him to have to care for me when I've had a seizure. It breaks my heart that he knows so well how to nurse an epileptic person. That's a scary thing to have to watch a stranger go through, and he has had to watch his own mother have countless seizures. No child should have to watch that. I don't want his mother to be another statistic.

I'm sincerely asking you to take into consideration my words. I have suffered greatly from Epilepsy. I take CBD oil regularly, and while it has helped more than the prescriptions ever did, it isn't enough! I understand what's happening when I have a seizure. There are babies and toddlers having seizures left and right, and they don't get it. How hard that must be to face everyday as a parent. I cannot begin to imagine. I have managed to stay put this long, and as a born and raised proud Kansan, I hope to keep it that way. I don't want to have to uproot my life and my family, because I can't safely take care of my disease. Think of all the heroine users that all started out taking pain pills, and then became addicted and desperate. If we focus on CBD only, people will still rely on prescriptions for pain relief. That wouldn't be happening with marijuana. Stop the opiate overdoses. It's medically impossible to overdose on marijuana. You would be saving lives. Please allow me full access to this life saving plant!