



TESTIMONY OF
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IN SUPPORT OF **SB 155**
KANSAS SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 20, 2017

- WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY -

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kansas is a non-partisan, non-political membership organization dedicated to preserving and strengthening the constitutional liberties afforded to every resident of Kansas. We work to preserve and strengthen our constitutional rights and freedoms through policy advocacy, litigation, and education. We proudly serve over 10,000 supporters in Kansas and represent more than 1 million supporters nationwide.

The ACLU of Kansas supports SB 155, which provides for the legal use of cannabis for certain debilitating medical conditions. We support SB 155 because:

- **Kansas should recognize cannabis as a potential cure, not a crime.** There is abundant scientific evidence to suggest that cannabis has significant medical benefits, especially for individuals with certain debilitating medical conditions like cancer. Cannabis can provide unique relief for these very serious conditions, including providing benefits that no other medicine provides as effectively or without serious side effects. The very clear medical evidence that cannabis can, in many instances, be a cure is why thousands of doctors across the country prescribe cannabis products to their patients. Nearly **one million patients nationwide now use medical cannabis as recommended by their doctors and in accordance with state laws.** Kansas should consider the treatment of a debilitating illness with a scientifically-proven, medically-effective solution to be a cure, not a crime.
- **Kansans should have the right to make decisions about their own healthcare, in consultation with their doctors.** Kansas should no longer interfere in the doctor-patient relationship by prohibiting this scientifically-proven treatment method. To do so is a violation of the individual's rights to make healthcare decisions, and a gross infringement of the constitutionally protected right to privacy.
- **Kansas should join the growing cohort of states that permit legal use of cannabis for debilitating medical conditions.** The first state to permit legal, physician-directed use of cannabis for medical conditions did so in 1996. Since then, **sixteen states** and the District of Columbia that remove criminal penalties for medical use of cannabis, define the eligibility for use, and structure access in some way. States that permit legal use include **Alaska, Arizona, Michigan, and Montana.** Many other states have similar laws pending or under active consideration in 2017.

We urge the committee to support SB 155.