

Written Testimony of Eric A. Voth, M.D., FACP
Senate Federal and State Affairs committee
Consideration of SB 155 regarding medicinal use of marijuana

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the committee on the issue of medical use of marijuana. For background, in addition to practicing Internal Medicine, Addiction Medicine, and Pain medicine for thirty years, I serve as the Chairman of the Institute on Global Drug Policy. This international drug policy think-tank contains some of the top world experts on marijuana. I have personally worked over thirty-five years for healthy drug policy that, among other things, advocates against the legalization or normalization of marijuana. I have spent ten years as the medical director of a chemical dependence unit. I have served as an advisor on alcohol and drug abuse issues to the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts, am a former member of the National Advisory Committee for the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of HHS.

Marijuana advocates are once again seeking to bury the intent to legalize marijuana under a mountain of verbiage and the Trojan horse of “medical” use.

This legislation bypasses the FDA processes for approving medicines, it vastly overstates the research for medicinal uses, and it creates a huge administrative burden for the state to administer at a time of fiscal crisis. **Making marijuana, or any drug available to the public by a legislative vote, bypasses the Food and Drug Administration requirements that demand careful research on the effectiveness of a drug as well as effective and toxic doses. The support for such a mistake is largely driven by anecdotes and unscientific individual observations- not borne out in research.**

To date, there is **no evidence of any medical disorder or group of suffering patients for which marijuana the only alternative or is superior to the available medicines.**

Oddly, the Institute of Medicine study of 1999 that the proponents use as their basis for support actually required that smoked use of marijuana should only be in carefully controlled research environments, and it also stated that the future of medical uses of marijuana lies with the cannabinoids, NOT with smoked marijuana. See attached.

The committee should know that I was a reviewer and consultant to that Institute of Medicine study.

This legislation also creates an extreme regulatory load by requiring approval of “marijuana cards” in only 15 days, and further sets out that failure to correctly fill out the application is the only grounds for refusal.

Critical questions that you must ask as a governing body include:

- 1). Is there a clearly effective dose of the “medicinal marijuana” that is safe and effective?
- 2). What toxic effects are present and how will they be monitored?
- 3). Who will standardize the available CBD concentrations and certify them? No dose nor concentration of THC is specified.
- 4). What sources of marijuana will be allowed? Illegal sources such as Mexico or sources provided by organized crime cartels?
- 5). What infrastructure is needed to safely monitor this and what is the cost to Kansas?
- 6). What is the requirement for medical follow-up and monitoring?

In summary, please oppose legislation that would allow marijuana to be used as medicine or that would legalize the drug. Such a move would jeopardize the public and create **medicine by popular vote**, which is a dangerous medical precedent.

Thank you for your consideration

Eric A, Voth MD, FACP

Chairman

The Institute on Global Drug Policy