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Kansas Legislature
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Re: Proponent, SB 560, Written and Oral Testimony

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Christina Frommer, President of the Canna Convict Project. We are a Missouri nonprofit whose mission is to assist our nonviolent cannabis inmates with their release from incarceration and address their exit needs. We do not believe any person should be imprisoned for a healing, medicinal plant.

Today I am submitting my testimony in support of SB 560. But to start, here is a brief background on myself. When Missouri began the roll out of our medical program, I personally felt insecure about how I would find my place in this new and exciting market. I do not have a medical background, but one of criminal justice. In the infancy of my criminal justice career I worked for our local Sheriff's office where I assisted with sex offender registration, property & evidence, the Junior Deputies program and sent out weekly media crime reports. For the past 11 years I have been blessed to work for a nonprofit in Kansas City Missouri which assists indigent defendants facing jail time due to civil, quasi criminal cases. Then in 2019 I started my own nonprofit with the above mission. Our board is comprised of attorney's paralegals, advocates as well as former cannabis POWs* themselves. Due to the lack of support for those in custody, our team felt it necessary to spend our time advocating for the voiceless.

Along the way we have been extremely honored to have been included in countless speaking engagements, conferences, expo's, etc; both small and large. We have made friends with many, many advocates, and patients. We have seen with our very own eyes the undeniable improvement in these patients lives due to cannabis therapies, for both physical and mental health. Personally I have seen cancer patients scans showing dramatic reduction in tumor growth. Seizure patients go from 200 seizures a day to 0. Chronic pain patients able to enjoy life with a significant reduction in pain levels. Veteran's with PTSD able to navigate their daily lives with a much more positive outlook. And a whole host of pharmaceutical therapies replaced with targeted cannabis and endocannabinoid therapies.

I want to make this clear; all cannabis use is medical use. It is impossible to consume this plant without it benefiting your endocannabinoid system. The one thing that has been lacking in the past is available and reliable research. Education is key to breaking the stigma¹. Cannabis was once in the top 3 most prescribed/recommended treatments by our health care providers². That is until it was written out of modern pharmacopeia in 1941³. Turning people who were once patients into criminals. The origin story of cannabis prohibition does not begin with the discovery of dangers associated with the plant. The story begins with greed and racism, evolving into scare campaigns, propaganda, and criminalization⁴. Our own government declared war on a plant⁵. This in turn frivolously destroyed generations of families due to high arrest rates and over incarceration. Thus, leaving large portions of our population impoverished, scarlet lettered with convictions and created cycles of generational incarceration⁶. This has to end. I believe everyone should have medical freedoms and the ability to decide which therapeutic path they wish to pursue. To reiterate, cannabis was once a regularly prescribed treatment. The government has been in an all-out WAR against the people for over 80 years. To make a few additional points, please see below.

I pray the cries of your citizens are heard. I pray you reinstate patients given rights for making medical decision and pursuing "alternative" treatments. I pray you revise your statutory criminal language. I pray you expunge records. I pray you see the truth. We have all been lied to long enough. It is time to heal. Thank you for your time and have a wonderful day.

*Cannabis POW is term a used to describe nonviolent individuals who are or have been incarcerated for cannabis possession, manufacturing and/or distribution, due to the War On Drugs.

(1) **Addiction:**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Cannabidiol%2C+a+Nonpsychotropic+Component+of+Cannabis%2C+Inhibits+Cue-Induced+Heroin+Seeking+and+Normalizes+Discrete+Mesolimbic+Neuronal+Disturbances>.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19958538>

Depression:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Cannabinoids+promote+embryonic+and+adult+hippocampus+neurogenesis+and+produce+anxiolytic+and+antidepressant-like+effects>. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14583744>

PTSD: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23433741>.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Elevated+Brain+Cannabinoid+CB1+Receptor+Availability+in+Posttraumatic+Stress+Disorder+A+Positron+Emission+Tomography+Study>

Autism: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23542787>.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Endocannabinoid+System+as+Novel+Therapeutic+Target+for+Autism+Treatment>

Cancer: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33246167/>. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33110020/>

Seizures: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26282273/>. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30194563/>

Just to name a few.

Cannabis prohibition:

1. ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾ **Dr. William Woodward:** (1937, re: Marihuana Tax Act) Representative of the AMA, passionately testified against the prohibition of this widely accepted & prescribed medicine. (Written out of pharmacopeia in 1941). <https://medicalmarijuana.uslegal.com/medical-use-of-marijuana-history/>. <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2020-03/marc-2020-issue-brief-medical-marijuana.pdf>
2. **Andrew Carnegie & John D Rockefeller:** Wanted to sell their patented, prescription drugs and steer pharmacopeia away from homeopathy: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flexner_Report. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJbOQ9P2NYQ> (Ted Talk on Endocannabinoid System)
3. ⁽⁴⁾ **Henry Anslinger:** 1st Director of the Bureau of Narcotics (1930) Racist: <https://www.leafly.com/news/cannabis-101/where-did-the-word-marijuana-come-from-anyway-01fb>. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_J._Anslinger. <https://www.thebluntness.com/posts/harry-anslinger-quotes#:~:text=%20%20%201%201%29%20%E2%80%9CMarijuana%20is%20an,leads%20to%20pacifism%20and%20communist%20brainwashing.%E2%80%9D%20More%20>
4. ⁽⁵⁾ **Nixon:** 1971 Declared “War on Drugs” sched. 1
5. **1980’s, 90’s:** Anti-Drug Abuse Act, “Just say no”, 3 strike: <https://drugpolicy.org/issues/brief-history-drug-war>

⁽⁶⁾ **Looking at the Numbers:**

1. **6+ million arrests were made between 2010 & 2018** for cannabis related offenses. (Disparity rates: blacks are nearly 4 times more likely to get arrested): <https://www.aclu.org/report/tale-two-countries-racially-targeted-arrests-era-marijuana-reform>
2. **Over 40,000 cannabis POWs** are incarcerated for nonviolent offenses. Many are first time offenders: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joanoleck/2020/06/26/with-40000-americans-incarcerated-for-marijuana-offenses-the-cannabis-industry-needs-to-step-up-activists-said-this-week/?sh=2b96e10c16f3>
3. **Over 52% of drug arrests** are for cannabis: <https://www.aclu.org/report/tale-two-countries-racially-targeted-arrests-era-marijuana-reform>
4. **Housing costs: \$37,000+/fed, \$13,000+/state:** <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/11/19/2019-24942/annual-determination-of-average-cost-of-incarceration-fee-coif>. <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2020/feb/4/missouri-requires-county-jails-house-state-prisoners-then-doesnt-pay-them/>
5. **Nearly 70%** of Americans are in favor of cannabis legalization: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/323582/support-legal-marijuana-inches-new-high.aspx>