

March 16, 2022  
Hearing on SB 560 for Medical Marijuana  
Written Testimony from  
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Dear Senator Welton,

I want to thank you for bringing HB 560 to a hearing, and share my families personal experience with prohibition of Cannabis.

In 2003, our 23 year old son was in a near fatal collision with a mail truck, a Jeep International, going up a hill on the wrong side of the gravel road we lived on. She hit my son in his little Toyota truck head on. It took three hours to extricate our son from his truck, and two years on crutches for him to learn to walk again. During that painful two years, because of a high rate of addiction in our family, our son refused to use opioids, even though his doctor tried to prescribe the drugs.

Instead, he used medical marijuana. Gradually he had started back to work managing our small family HVAC business. His father, my husband, had serious health problems from long term diabetes and was going blind from glaucoma. Our son was coming back to work just in time to save his father.

And then one evening in 2005, as our family was finally starting to recover from the accident and breathe easy again, an old high school classmate on our boy had heard about his accident and stopped by to ask our son to sell him some cannabis.

Our son was not selling cannabis. He was just a patient consumer. But his "friend" had a story about being in pain, and our son felt sorry for him and against his better judgment, sold the kid \$75 worth of his medicine, Within hours our gentle, kind son was on the floor with a police boot on his newly healed hip. His home was surrounded by 10 police cars. They bashed in his door with a battering ramp, pulled our son and his girlfriend out of bed, threw them both naked on the floor and handcuffed them.

The "old friend" had been found with some kind of drugs by the Johnson County Sheriff's department, and turned to being a narcotic agent to keep himself from going to jail. He used my son.

It took us five days to get our son out of jail. My husband suffered a TIA (mini-stroke) from the stress. The terms of our boy's release involved drug screens for cannabis. When I picked him up from jail, I had to bring his crutches back. His hip had been re-injured when the police threw him on the floor and put a boot in his back.

I had to get my son a doctor's appointment. His pain was debilitating and now he could not use cannabis. The doctor prescribed Oxycontin. It was fine with Kansas for our son to be on Oxycontin which has killed millions of American's yet he could not use his cannabis, which has never killed anyone.

My son was addicted with his first pill. We watched our beautiful son who had fought his way back from so much, learned to walk all over again and work so hard to heal, we watched him disappear into shadow.

One day we got a call from a customer who had already paid for a new air conditioner. When we went to see our son, we found not only had he collected the money for the job, but he had sold all of our

equipment to buy Oxycontin on the black market, which was selling at the time for \$40 a pill. Soon he graduated to heroin which is much cheaper.

When he had nothing left to sell, he stole. And when he got caught stealing, he went to jail. That was the first night I slept in a long time. I knew he was safe. Do you realize how awful that is? To be grateful your child is in jail because he is safe from the Sackler's Oxycontin there??

We would not let anyone bail him out. He detoxed in jail for 60 days. His attorney thought he could get probation. Before his trial I wrote to the Judge and told him my son was a heroin addict from having his cannabis taken away and becoming addicted to Oxycontin. My son did not need jail, but he could not come home, he was an addict and he would die, he needed rehab. I begged the Judge not to give my son probation without rehab. The Judge listened.

Our son was sent to TC (Therapeutic Community) in Johnson County and was doing great. He was two weeks from graduating the six month program, and had been elected President of the group. His skin was clear, his eyes were bright and he was ready to get out and go back to work, to try to rebuild our family business he had destroyed and be the amazing dad again his daughter had lost during his addiction. And just in time. His dad's health was continuing to fail.

Two weeks before he completed rehab, the Federal Deputies showed up at the rehab center and took him into custody as the 8<sup>th</sup> and final co-conspirator in the dirty Dr. Webb's web of conceit. Dr. Webb operated an Oxycontin ring out of his Sport's Medicine Clinic in Oak Park Mall. After the raid, when our son had to go back on crutches when the police injured his hip, a mule of Dr. Webb's who lived in our son's apartment complex approached our son with a way to get all the Oxycontin he "needed". It turns out the doctor was already under investigation. Our son was caught on video entering and leaving his clinic on three occasions. This was enough for our son to be charged as the eighth co-conspirator in the multi-millionaire's drug ring. Our son was doing so well with the drug ring he was stealing tools to buy heroin. Dr. Webb was found with \$1.2 million dollars in his safe, and is serving 10 years. Our son served almost five.

With the two Kansas felony marijuana convictions, one for possession of less than three ounces of cannabis, very legal for Missouri patients, and one for sales of 7 grams of cannabis, he fell under the Federal mandatory minimum sentences brought to us by the Reagan Administration under the advice of ALEC. Our son was now looking at a mandatory minimum 7-10 year sentence.

He was sentenced to, and served 44 months in Federal Prison. He was transferred to Forest City, Arkansas, an 11 hour drive, in 2012. Tax payers spent approximately \$500,000 incarcerating an able bodied non-violent young man,

He never see his father again.

The pressure on my husband having to go back to work rebuilding our business again coupled with the heartache of losing our son for so long was too much for him. He died while our son was behind bars.

Cannabis is never a gateway drug to other drugs like Oxycontin, fentanyl and heroin. What is a gateway to these drugs is law enforcement. By handcuffing our families, by arresting our kids, by putting them on drug-screens and forcing them to see regular physicians for prescription drugs with a side effect of addiction and death, you have become a major *cause* of the opioid epidemic and deaths. We lost over 100,000 thousand American people last year from overdoses on these drugs. Put the drugs that kill on the schedule and take cannabis off. It has never killed anyone.

Thank you for your time today. Please, do the right thing.

Dolores Montgomery Halbin, RN, BSN