



# Please Support Medical Marijuana in Connecticut by Supporting House Bill 6715

## *Compassionate Use Campaign*

### **For Some Seriously Ill Patients Currently Available Medications — Including Marinol — Are Not Effective in Treating Pain, Muscle Spasms, Nausea, Loss of Appetite, Wasting and Other Devastating Symptoms**

Each year thousands of people in Connecticut are diagnosed with cancer, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis and other life threatening diseases. The suffering of these patients, many in the final stages of their lives, is devastating for them and their families. For some of these patients, currently available medications are not effective in alleviating terrible symptoms such as pain, muscle spasms, nausea, loss of appetite and wasting.

While Marinol, an oral medication that contains components of marijuana, is currently available by prescription it too is ineffective for some patients. Research has shown that Marinol is often poorly absorbed and patients complain that dosage is hard to monitor and control. In addition, for patients suffering from nausea and vomiting, or who are unable to swallow, Marinol is unreliable.

Allowing patients access to medical marijuana has been endorsed by numerous medical and professional organizations including the Congressionally chartered Institute of Medicine, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Public Health Association, the American Nurses Association, and the National Association of Attorneys General.

### **Connecticut Supports Allowing Access to Medical Marijuana**

A 2004 poll conducted by the University of Connecticut Center for Survey and Research Analysis found that 83% of respondents support allowing access to medical marijuana. This level of support is consistent with that found in other states and national polls. A 2004 national poll by the American Association of Retired Persons found that 72% of those polled support allowing use of marijuana for medical purposes.

For some patients for whom currently available medications are not effective, medical marijuana may provide relief from suffering and improve quality of life. Common sense and compassion compel the conclusion that Connecticut should allow seriously ill patients access to medical marijuana. Access would require a written certification from a physician to the qualifying patient for the medical use of marijuana. Allowing access to medical marijuana would alleviate the suffering and improve the quality of life for many Connecticut residents living with serious illnesses.

In 1999, the Congressionally chartered Institute of Medicine, in the most comprehensive study of medical marijuana's effectiveness, concluded that, "nausea, appetite loss, pain and anxiety . . . all can be mitigated by marijuana."

*– Marijuana and Medicine:  
Assessing the Science Base,  
Institute of Medicine, 1999.*

Eleven states currently allow patients legal access to medical marijuana:

1. Alaska
2. California
3. Colorado
4. Hawaii
5. Maine
6. Montana
7. Nevada
8. Oregon
9. Rhode Island
10. Vermont
11. Washington