



Dear Friend,

We would like to take just a few minutes of your time to tell you our story and ask for your help in relieving suffering in New Jersey. Our son Sean died of a rare form of cancer in the summer of 2004. He was only twenty-eight years old.



*Don and Gerry McGrath*

Because of his age and the virulent nature of his illness, Sean's team of physicians at a leading medical center in New York chose to fight the disease very aggressively. He had several major surgeries and received 9-hour chemotherapy treatments each week. To combat the pain and nausea that resulted from the surgeries, chemo sessions and the cancer itself, he was given every available FDA-approved medication. Unfortunately they were simply not effective. If he was awake, he was suffering and his weight dropped to under 100 pounds. All of Sean's loved ones, including Gerry, who has been an active Registered Nurse for over 40 years, were desperate to relieve his suffering.

Then his medical team suggested "off the record" that he try marijuana. He was reluctant at first but he did try it and it worked. For the next 18 months, Sean used marijuana daily and it enabled him to survive and fight the disease. It relieved his terrible nausea, vomiting, and wasting, allowing him to eat normally for the first time in months. Never once did Sean get high from marijuana but it was the only medicine that made him feel normal. As Sean's parents, we saw directly that marijuana was effective in improving Sean's quality of life by relieving the awful symptoms and side effects associated with his cancer and treatment.

Because New Jersey is not among the states that allow legal access to medical marijuana, Sean and all of us who loved him were forced to risk arrest in order to ease his suffering. No patient, no family, no loved one should be forced to live in fear of arrest simply because they want to ease such terrible suffering.

Senate Bill 119 and Assembly Bill 804 would allow seriously ill patients to have access to medical marijuana with a doctor's recommendation. This legislation would set up a program, run by the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services, where patients with a doctor's recommendation would have to apply to become part of a medical marijuana registry and be given a registry card identifying them as patients allowed to possess small amounts of medical marijuana. This program would be very similar to the medical marijuana programs that exist in thirteen other states. This is a compassionate and common sense answer to relieving suffering when currently available medications are not effective.

We ask that you review the attached Compassionate Use Campaign information packet and consider joining the Compassionate Use Campaign and supporting Senate Bill 119 and Assembly Bill 804. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don McGrath". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerry McGrath". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Don and Gerry McGrath