

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2008

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

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AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Friday, February 29, 2008
TIME: 2:15 p.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 309
 State Capitol
 415 South Beretania Street

AMENDED AGENDA

(Amended to reflect correction to Bill Number HB 2675 to HB 2675, HD1)

DECISION MAKING TO FOLLOW

HB2675, HD1
(HSCR 469-08)

PENDING RE-REFERRAL

Status

RELATING TO MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Increases the number of marijuana plants allowed for

HLT,PSM

medical use by a patient with written certification to 14 plants. Creates the medical marijuana task force to discuss the value of constructing secure growing facilities for medical marijuana and study inter-island transport issues related to medical marijuana. (HB2675 HD1)

DECISION MAKING TO FOLLOW

Bill No: HB 2675 HD1

Bill Title: RELATING TO MARIJUANA

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Chair: Representative Cindy Evans Co Chair: Representative Sharon E. Har

Hearing Date: Friday, February 29, 2008 Hearing Time: 2:15 P.M.

Hearing Location: Conference Room 309

Testimony from: Joseph B. Rattner, OD, CSAC

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Representing: Myself; Patients living with AIDS in Hawaii
West Oahu Hope For A Cure Foundation

Aloha Representative Cindy Evan (*Chair*), Representative Sharon E. Har (*Vice Chair*) and Committee Members,

My name is Joseph Rattner, and it is an honor and a privilege to submit testimony in

strong support of HB 2675 HD1.

I will be HIV positive for seventeen years come this March 15, 2008.

I have lived on this beautiful island of Oahu, Hawaii for 61/2 years now and have possessed a Medicinal Medical Marijuana license here for four. I am also a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor and am proud to say that I have counseled many into recovery from the East Coast

of New Jersey to our local Ohana members in Hawaii. Mostly I am proud to be the Founder and Executive Director of West Oahu Hope For A Cure Foundation located in Ewa Beach.

First off I must say that trying to grow Marijuana is a science, which takes an enormous amount of time. Although my first plant was successful, the ways and means of it happening; correctly each time;

can be nerve racking, especially if your medicine is running out.

Appetite, nausea, pain relief and even a major stress reducer, are

of course all advantageous benefits that medicinal marijuana serves when you have a CHRONIC ILLNESS.

There are approximately 4,024 patients in the State of Hawaii presently possessing medical marijuana licenses.

HB 2675 HD1 will give patients who qualify the opportunity to Lease a plot of a *'secure growing facility'* on any of the Hawaiian Islands, including but not limited to, Maui, Oahu, Kauai, Big Island, Molokai.....

The possibility of an experienced 'Farmer' that will grow your medicine is up for talks by the task force. In my eyes, this characteristic of the Bill helps to serve in the protection aspect. Not only for the patient; but for the care giver and the land at which the marijuana is grown. By increasing the amount of plants to a flat fourteen with an once per plant maximum will cover all detrimental activities which may occur if restricted to only 7 plants with a worry of sanctioning by local authorities who are to assess the maturity of the plants before giving you a citation for not obeying the Laws of Medicinal Marijuana.

Medical Marijuana is legal in Hawaii and by allowing patients of HIV, Cancer,

Glaucoma, and other conditions, which require this treatment, a safer way of getting the Medication they need to survive, the safer we all are.

A *"certified facilitator"* will determine the strains needed for the

plants, a *"plot"* will then be "leased" by the qualifying patient from a

'secure growing facility'. A task force of experienced persons in this field will develop the expansion and protection of Hawaii's Medical Marijuana Program. A Department of Health designee, three members of the Drug Policy Forum, a Certified Prescribing Physician, and three Licensed Patients in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawaii will report on the efficacy of Marijuana and secure a safe haven for patients and care givers. The most critical issue facing Hawaii medical marijuana patients is the acquisition of our medicine. Theft, armed

robbery, and police/helicopter eradication raids continually threaten patients' safety.

The Hawaii Revised Statute states that legal medical marijuana patients can acquire and possess the medicine that their doctor recommends, but patients have no choice but to acquire from an unregulated and unethical black market. It is not in the interest of Hawaii's public health to force patients into this "black market."

The important question is: How does a patient who is diagnosed with cancer and to undergo chemotherapy immediately acquire the medicine that his/her doctor recommends? In this case, there is not enough time for the patient to grow, harvest and cure the medicine that will help with nausea during imminent chemotherapy treatments; added stress from buying medicine from drug dealers will not help the health of such vulnerable patient.

It is essential for people living with HIV to take their medications. The side effects cause much stomach upset with the constant need to try and stop vomiting. The marijuana makes taking the medicines bearable. Hunger and the need to stay hungry for a balanced diet is where another important aspect of medicinal marijuana plays such a huge role in the recovery and better health for patients.

This bill makes it easier for patients' to have access to their legally prescribed marijuana. There will be less drug trafficking from Waikiki to Waianae, especially preventing the risk areas near our schools.

Experienced patients, who have proven to comply with their regimen, should be given this chance to feel safe about smoking their medicinal marijuana.

For these and many other reasons, I strongly support HB2675 HD1.

Mahalo nui loa for giving me the opportunity to share my views.

With much Aloha,

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