

STATE IDENTITY
EXHIBIT NO 8
DATE 1/31/11
88170

Valerie Hellermann

My legs were crushed, my jaw, skull and L orbit of my eye were fractured in a MVA. I was struck by a drunk driver when I was 29 years old. I spent 6 months in the hospital recovering from the initial injuries.

Over the years I have had more than 25 surgeries and currently have 3 artificial joints. I have chronic pain , I have nerve damage. My pain at times is severe, at times persistent and at times intractable. I have been to a pain specialist.

The drugs I have been offered are all highly addictive opiates. These drugs do alter the perception of pain,they make me drowsy, hallucinogenic at times and unable to participate in my life or hold a job. I cannot think clearly.

Medical Cannabis , a scientifically proven medicine, alters my perception of pain, relaxes the muscle spasms I have and soothes the damaged nerves so the intractable burning nerve pain is diminished and often gone. There is SCIENCE to this. We have cannabanoid receptors in our body . They are there for a physiological reason. Medical cannabis allows me to be alert, functional able to work and to participate fully because it controls my discomfort. My long term primary care physician suggested the use of cannabis based on my history. Why would my physician need to have his decision reviewed and pay a fee for prescribing cannabis and not highly addictive opiates.

I object to this bill's strict definitions for qualifying patients.

Consider for a moment if any of you had intractable, persistent , unrelieved pain? Your doctor prescribes highly addictive opiates .Could you live a normal life? Could you show up and function at your job? Should you be driving under the influence of morphine or oxicontin? Even the DRUG WARNING on the label warns against operating heavy machinery. Again medical cannabis allows one to be alert and functional while relieving pain.

But one step back. Why should a person's pain have to be so severe. A persistent dull ache or intermittent muscle spasms can cause a disruption in a person's ability to be engaged and functional. Let's save the opiates for the times when the pain is severe and intractable, like after a trauma or surgery. Allow us our medical cannabis to keep us OFF the couch and out of our beds and into the work force.

Please I implore you to look at the science, read the research, learn why just about every culture in this world has used cannabis medicinally. Let the SCIENCE replace your FEAR.