

Madam Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to address the committee on the issue of medical use of marijuana. For background, I am here today as the Chairman of the Institute on Global Drug Policy, an international drug policy think-tank that contains some of the top world experts on marijuana. I have personally worked over thirty-five years for healthy drug policy that, among other things, advocates against the legalization or normalization of marijuana. I have spent ten years as the medical director of a chemical dependence unit, and have spent thirty years in practice as an Internal Medicine, Addiction Medicine, and Pain Medicine physician. I have served as an advisor on alcohol and drug abuse issues to the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts, am a former member of the National Advisory Committee for the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of HHS, and am a Clinical Associate Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Kansas School of Medicine.

I have also advised the Reagan, Clinton, both Bush, and Obama administrations, and have advised or testified for numerous Congressional offices on drug related issues. Additionally I have lectured internationally and have appeared on or consulted to, numerous other radio media, and have been quoted by numerous international print media.

Today, along with representing the Institute on Global Drug Policy, I have been asked to represent the views of the Kansas Medical Society.

I am strongly opposed to the medicinal uses of marijuana. Marijuana is highly impure, and the amount of THC or other active ingredients varies widely. Instead of being a stable and predictable compound like we would demand with true medication, the THC content of marijuana varies from an average of 12% to around 30% and even as high as 80% with hash oil variants. This is at least five to ten times as powerful as the marijuana of the 1960's and 70's.

**Making marijuana available to the public by a legislative vote, bypasses the Food and Drug Administration requirements that demand careful research on the effectiveness of a drug as well as effective and toxic doses. The support for such a mistake is largely driven by anecdotes and unscientific individual observations- not**

**borne out in research. In fact, current research suggests its medical effects are marginal if not actually negative. Some specifics will appear in my PowerPoint presentation.**

To date, there is no evidence of any medical disorder or group of suffering patients for which marijuana the only alternative or is superior to the available medicines. Investigational New Drug Trials already exist through the FDA to study marijuana and its derivatives in closely supervised research environments. Individual marijuana-like substances can be researched, isolated, or synthesized and developed for medical uses. THC is already available as a prescription medicine (Marinol), and there are other medicines based on marijuana being developed (Sativex and Epidiolex).

We have seen the states allowing medicinal marijuana experience huge rises in marijuana use, doubling of marijuana-related traffic fatalities, increases in crime, and most importantly increased in adolescent marijuana use. Colorado has experienced massive increases in homeless marijuana users moving into the state, and has seen drastic increases in child poisonings from edible forms of marijuana. Just since the passage of marijuana legalization but prior to its implementation in Colorado, marijuana use in adolescents is 72% higher than the national average. Marijuana use in adolescents in the states that allow medicinal use is consistently higher than in other states.

Marijuana itself is not a benign recreational drug. To name a few effects, it causes numerous structural brain changes, reduces intellect and IQ, changes cognitive processes, damages the lungs, is associated with violence and spousal/domestic/dating abuse. Its use is associated with birth and developmental abnormalities.

In summary, please oppose legislation that would allow marijuana to be used as medicine or that would legalize the drug. Such a move would jeopardize the public and create **medicine by popular vote** which is a dangerous medical precedent.

Thank you for your consideration