

April 21, 2017

To whom it may concern,

As an Alaskan farmer, for the last 39 years, I've seen a lot of industrial and agricultural ideas try and fail. I've also worked for the past 18 years educating state government officials on the industry I make a living from. As a private business owner I've strived to share the importance and necessity of continued growth and ingenuity of new industries that could expand our states growth and economics.

Alaska is so remote, we are by necessity very diverse in all different aspects of agricultural production. Due to the high cost of shipping to and from Alaska, doing business in our state brings with it additional challenges and risk when pioneering new ideas.

As a producer here in Alaska, I see the strong potential for new growth in jobs, economics, and opportunity to expand with a different source of revenue. Our state relies so heavily on the oil and gas we produce, and as we're seeing, when petroleum goes down, we go with it.

Please make our case, as well as our voices heard in self-regulating our state. I see a place for federal oversight, but at the same time not the interference of the federal government. Each state will have its own geographic and economic challenges in dealing with this new cannabis industry. I feel it would be to the federal governments benefit to support the state's voting majorities by allowing Alaska to self-regulate this industry. Isn't this what our democracy was founded on, "For the people, by the people"

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Adam Boyd', enclosed within a faint, light-colored oval border.

Adam Boyd



Inspire Wellness. Empower Change. Discover Health.
April 17, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of House Joint Resolution NO. 21 currently in the Alaska State Legislature. Currently there are 26 states and the District of Columbia where medical use is legal and three more to join after recent ballot measures passed in their respective states. In addition, there are 7 states where recreational use is legal and 13 states with ballot measures pending in 2017.

As a practicing physician in Alaska I am respectfully requesting that the new Administration uphold the state's rights to regulate this issue. Despite my inability to prescribe even medical marijuana, there is no doubt that cannabis and/or derivatives have multiple benefits including seizure disorders, neuropathic pain, nausea, and multiple issues associated with chemotherapy. As a physician specializing in the treatment of chronic pain and cancer pain my patients have found no other alternatives to improve their lives when traditional medicine has failed to provide relief.

I respect the Federal Governments role in regulating interstate trade and commerce and would hope that the new Administration would continue to respect the rights of states to regulate this issue by continuing to focus on the 8 guidelines presented in the Cole Memo published by the Department of Justice in August of 2013.

By continuing to focus the energies of the Department of Justice on these guidelines patients will continue to benefit from their ability to access this treatment option when indicated in the states that enacted laws to govern its availability.

We can argue the scientific evidence demonstrating benefit from cannabis both economically and medically but that is for another forum. I would welcome any further opportunities to discuss this issue more formally in the future if the opportunity would arise.

Respectfully,

Tom Grissom, M.D.

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April 21, 2017

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kira Boyd, I am the wife a lifelong Alaskan farmer, mother of six and have the privilege to serve as the Practice Administrator for the largest Interventional Pain practice in Alaska. I am writing in support of Representative Guttenberg's House Joint Resolution No. 21, urging the federal government to allow the state of Alaska to self-regulate its new cannabis industry.

As the wife of a farmer, I have seen the struggles that agriculture in Alaska bring. In parts of Alaska our soils are rich and plentiful, allowing us to grow some of the largest vegetables in the world. Unfortunately, due to the nature of shipping costs to and from Alaska, we are unable to export our produce to other parts of the country as it would not be cost effective. This constraint truly limits Alaska's capability to make a footprint in the United States for our agricultural industry, while at the same time limiting our livelihood as farmers.

I see great potential in Alaska's burgeoning cannabis industry. This industry has the potential to not only decrease state budget deficits with the Marijuana tax put in place, but has the capability to improve our economy by creating more jobs. The cannabis industry will provide a new challenge to Alaskan farmers and provide a crop that will produce revenue that no vegetable crop ever will.

Due to the nature of my role as wife of a farmer, mother and manager of a medical practice, I have the unique opportunity to see this industry from different points of view. Raised in a religious and conservative household, I was taught that marijuana was a drug and not to be used under any circumstance. Now I am grown and raising children of my own, who are encouraged to educate themselves just as I have.

Over the last couple of years, I have had the pleasure of becoming close to a family who has a child with special needs. This young boy suffers from a seizure disorder that started when he was just three years old. This family had a normal, happy, and active toddler until one day he seized. That seizure was the first of what would be hundreds and thousands to come. These seizures took a toll on the little boy, as anyone can imagine. He is now fourteen years old, he cannot speak, he cannot use the bathroom like a normal child his age, and his family must maintain for him a strict diet as to not exacerbate his disorder. I have my own fourteen-year-old son who is active and healthy and when I look at him my heart breaks for this other family who I have had the fortune to get to know. The toll that their son's disability has had on their family is insurmountable.

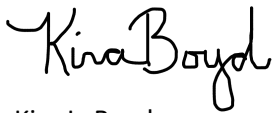
I share this relationship and story because this family traveled the world searching for an effective treatment to save their son. They were losing the little boy that they knew to a terrible disorder over which no one had control. After traveling around the globe and trying and failing all modern medicine options, this family finally turned to cannabis. Cannabis has been the ONLY treatment effective in controlling their son's seizures. Unfortunately, this option was discovered after their son's seizure disorder severely debilitated him. This family's journey has opened my mind to the capabilities and possibilities of what I was taught was a dangerous drug and has prompted me to educate myself further.

As the Practice Administrator of an interventional pain medicine practice, I encounter patients daily who are looking for solutions to their pain. We treat veterans with combat related injuries, patients with pain caused by accidents, degenerative diseases, cancer, migraines, failed surgeries and many other causes. We do our best to treat these patients with interventional techniques such as epidural steroid injections, Radio Frequency ablations, Stem Cells, Platelet Rich Plasma injections, etc., however, many of these patients still need something for their chronic pain when their interventional procedures wear off or they have lingering pain that their procedures did not remedy. The interventional pain physicians in our practice see great potential in the medical benefits of marijuana for patients struggling with chronic pain.

When considering the opioid epidemic crisis that America is currently dealing with and trying to overcome, physicians need to be given the autonomy and authority to recommend alternative treatment options such as cannabis, to their patients. The illegal nature of cannabis on the federal level not only makes physicians hesitant to recommend cannabis as a natural and safe alternative to the much more dangerous opioid, but restricts the patient's safe access to this natural alternative.

Alaska is moving in the right direction. I urge the federal government to allow Alaska to continue to self-regulate this new industry that is becoming widely recognized and legalized amongst states across the country. I would also urge the United States federal government to revisit some of the policies relating to the marijuana industry, such as restrictions on banking, that cause continued struggle for those who are striving to open and maintain legitimate marijuana businesses within the United States.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kira Boyd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kira L. Boyd



Inspire Wellness. Empower Change. Discover Health.

April 19, 2017

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to support House Joint Resolution No. 21, introduced April 16, 2017 which urges the federal government to respect previous federal guidance on marijuana policy; specifically pertaining to the "Cole Memo," and "Marijuana-Related Business (FIN-2014-G001)."

As a board certified pain medicine specialist practicing in Alaska, I have seen firsthand the benefits of medical marijuana. I was initially skeptical for the use of marijuana in medicine having grown up in Utah, a conservative state, as well as a member of a conservative family. I have since helped a family member navigate the journey of gaining and trying to maintain consistent access to medical marijuana. This family member, at the time, was an 8 year old boy with uncontrolled seizures. Despite our best efforts in "traditional western" medicine, he continued to have 3-4 seizures per hour...yes, I said "per hour." He had tried and failed multiple well known seizure medications and had multiple evaluations at some of our Nation's best medical institutions. His last option, at that time was a recommendation given by a neurosurgeon to have a hemispherectomy (removal of half his brain). Seeking alternatives, the patient's mother repeatedly asked me to consider marijuana for over a year. Over this year, I found published articles dating back to the 1970's demonstrating the use of cannabinoids for seizure control. Ultimately, after educating myself on scientific literature and discounting the mass public propaganda that I was raised to believe, I helped this family member relocate to Colorado (where he could gain access to medical marijuana). Within one week of starting this therapy his seizures reduced by over 90% and he continues to be on this therapy today.

This personal journey started a new direction in my scientific career, investigating further the uses of medical marijuana. The most common uses that patients seek marijuana for are pain, anxiety, insomnia, seizures, spasticity, nausea, and vomiting. However, it has been well established that many cannabinoids contained in marijuana also have anti-inflammatory capabilities which have impacted many auto-inflammatory conditions such as Crohn's Disease and Psoriasis.

Medical patients continue to suffer needlessly without access to marijuana in some States. More than half the States in our union now have legislation allowing patient access to marijuana. However, there continues to be patients that are "medical refugees," forced to relocate away from their homes and family to gain access to the care they need in a "marijuana friendly" state. This really needs to change! Medical patients need to have access nationally, and need to be able to travel within our great nation without worry of prosecution. It's interesting to note that a study was recently published that demonstrated a decrease in Medicaid expenditure in States that have marijuana access, suggesting the use of marijuana has resulted in more effective therapy with less side effects than current pharmaceutical options: ("Medical Marijuana Laws May Be Associated With A Decline In The Number Of Prescriptions For Medicaid Enrollees Health Aff (Millwood) April 2017 0:2017hlthaff.2016.1135v1-10.1377/hlthaff.2016.1135.")

Despite these States efforts the marijuana industry continues to struggle without access to banking. There is much that the Federal Government could do to stop the suffering of patient's in this country. I hope that by supporting this resolution it will continue to allow patient access to therapy by continued support of State's efforts of regulation and access to marijuana.

Sincerely,

Matthew R Peterson, MD

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