

Federal and State Committee

Topic: Medical Cannabis

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Room # 346-S

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Greetings Committee Members and Honorable Chairperson,

Thank you for taking up proposed legislation for medical marijuana. As a Kansan who has struggled with pain and PTSD for over 35 years, I would like to share my personal experience and perhaps help you understand why medical marijuana is desperately needed.

My name is Dana Stelting-Kempf and I suffer from both mental and physical disabilities. I have PTSD, severe fibromyalgia, arthritis, degenerated disc disorder with herniated, bulging and deteriorated discs in cervical and thoracic vertebrae. I also have a history of migraines and have Type 2 diabetes. I have had reconstructive surgery on my right forearm, interior, to reconnect four severed tendons and a peripheral nerve.

Treatments for my issues included a wide array of trials and failures. For years I used Darvocet in the generic form to control my pain. This substance was [banned](#) in 2010. Dr. James Warren then changed the medication to Tylenol 3 and then finally to Tylenol 4. Other prescriptions included muscle relaxers, antidepressants, anti-inflammatory medications, Celebrex (also removed from the market) as well as topical medications and lidocaine patches.

Treatments for PTSD included therapy and powerful psychotropic medications, whose side effects were intolerable. My migraines are managed now with Aimovig and I must say, it has been a life saver.

Dr. Christopher Southwick continued the Tylenol 4 treatment for intense pain but I told him I also managed my disorders with marijuana. He allowed me to continue to use cannabis for relaxation. When I use marijuana, there is a moment, between 30 seconds and one minute where I have no pain. None. It only lasts a brief moment, but for that moment I am freed. It's exhausting to fight pain day in and out. This substance helps with the never ending upset stomach too.

Before I became disabled, I lived life to its fullest. I grew up swimming, horseback riding, dancing, acting, and was the child that couldn't hold still. As an adult, I was much the same. I loved camping and water skiing. I also loved to bike ride, walk on stilts and never said no to an adventure. I took my physicality for granted. When my disorders hit, I had to accept that I could no longer do much of what made life so awesome. Today, I have become nearly sedentary and as the years pass, the continued strain of constant pain pushes me to my limits. I have often asked God how is it possible to be in so much pain and not die?

Until I met Dr Southwick, I felt ashamed for occasionally using cannabis with my medication when it was available. I was also terrified I could lose my freedom. He told me if marijuana helps me, he would not tell me not to. Now I am no longer ashamed thanks to this marvelous pain specialist, but I am still a criminal every time I use cannabis to help manage my disorders.

Below is a link to a study showing how cannabis helps with certain neurological conditions.

If you wish to contact me, you may phone me at 785 219-2301. My email is [danasteltingkempf@yahoo.com](mailto:danasteltingkempf@yahoo.com)

Looking Forward,

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[Systematic review: Efficacy and safety of medical marijuana in selected neurologic disorders](#)

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