

POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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MAYOR



BOISSE P. CORREA
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DEPUTY CHIEFS

OUR REFERENCE LK-TA

February 17, 2009

The Honorable Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair
and Members
Committee on Judiciary
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Karamatsu and Members

Subject: House Bill No. 1635, Relating to Controlled Substances

I am Louis Kealoha, Captain of the Narcotics/Vice Division of the Honolulu Police Department, City and County of Honolulu.

The Honolulu Police Department supports House Bill No. 1635, Relating to Controlled Substances.

Passage of this bill would amend chapter 329, Hawaii Revised Statutes, regarding requirements and penalties related to medical marijuana. The recommended amendments will serve to strengthen chapter 329 and discourage people who may violate and exploit Hawaii's medical marijuana program for their own benefit.

The Honolulu Police Department urges you to support House Bill No. 1635, Relating to Controlled Substances.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


LOUIS KEALOHA, Captain
Narcotics/Vice Division

APPROVED:

for: 
BOISSE P. CORREA
Chief of Police

Serving and Protecting With Aloha

House Judiciary Committee
February 17, 2009 at 2:00pm
HB 1635 – Relating to Controlled Substances

Position: **STRONGLY OPPOSED**

Date 2/17/09

I am a medical marijuana patient residing on Oahu, and a member of Americans for Safe Access.

HB1635 seeks to limit the “qualifying conditions” for medical cannabis in Hawaii to only three illnesses: cancer, glaucoma and HIV/AIDS. Any other medical condition has to be approved by the Department of Health in response to a request from a physician or potentially qualifying patient. This is a severe restriction that will adversely impact many patients throughout the entire State of Hawaii.

Cannabis has been proven for thousands of years to treat and relieve symptoms of Asthma, Glaucoma, Nausea, Epilepsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Cystic Fibrosis, Muscle Spasms, Sea Sickness, Depression, Dementia, Senility, Alzheimer's, Insomnia, Back Pain, PMS, Arthritis, Herpes, Rheumatism, Sickle Cell, Expectorant, Stress, Migraines, HIV/AIDS, Tumors, Arthritis, ADD & ADHD, High Blood Pressure, Diabetes, and many other diseases and conditions.

It should be left up to a medical doctor to decide what treatment is best for each individual patient. Limiting the “qualifying conditions” takes away options from the doctor, and therefore would impact the lives of many patients, including myself.

I have suffered for over 15 years with debilitating migraines 3 to 4 times per week. For years I was given numerous narcotic medications in an attempt to control my migraines, none of which actually helped with the pain or accompanying nausea, and all of them had their own side-effects, some of which were worse than the migraine itself and caused me to be hospitalized several times.

With having 3 to 4 severe migraines per week, basically I had to put my life on hold. I could not be a productive member of society or live a normal life. Almost daily I had to rotate between multiple narcotic prescriptions in an attempt to keep the pain under control. At least once per month I was taken to the Emergency Room for an injection of Demerol, Morphine, or Toradol when the narcotics that I had on hand at home did not work to control the excruciating pain.

The legislature's decision to pass the medical marijuana law in 2000 is what prompted me to move to Hawaii, so that I could finally have access to the medication that I so desperately needed to regain control of my life. Since moving to Hawaii and becoming a medical cannabis patient I have been able to stop all of the narcotic medications, and have only been seen in the Emergency Room one time in the past two years.

Medical cannabis eases my chronic pain and nausea better than any over-the-counter or prescription medication ever has been able to. The American College of Physicians as well as numerous other physician associations support expanded research into conditions that medical marijuana can be effective on. Now is not the time to limit "qualifying conditions."

Local law enforcement in testimony on February 5th supports this bill because it will "discourage those who may be tempted to violate and exploit Hawaii's medical marijuana program for their own benefit." I disagree. I feel the penalties already in place are sufficient to discourage those people who wish to violate this law. It would be a crime to reduce the "qualifying conditions" to only three and force other patients to abandon medical marijuana, which they (and I) have found to be effective.

Anyone who has ever suffered from a disease or disability which includes chronic pain knows all too well the side effects which continually taking narcotic pain relievers can cause including nausea & vomiting, constipation, urinary retention, central nervous system side effects, itching, headache, and other less common side effects.

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If this bill is passed, the legislature will be responsible for forcing honest, law abiding, productive citizens like myself, to become criminals in order for them to have access to their medication to control their pain and relieve their symptoms which they have found relief for by using medical cannabis.

Removing the other current qualifying diagnosis's amounts to the legislature discriminating against the citizens of Hawaii by favoring one disabling condition over another.

All citizens deserve equal treatment from their elected representatives, and deserve equal safe access to proven medical treatments for their disabling conditions.

I implore the legislature to seriously consider the ramifications that this bill will have on the seriously ill patients of Hawaii, and that you will also see that passage of this bill will cause more harm to the citizens than any good that can possibly come out of it.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RC Anderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ABp. RC Anderson, Ph.D., Th.D., D.Cnl., D.D., C.C.P.C.

(808) 233-9803

karamatsu3-Leanne

From: BOB DOKE [bobdoke@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2009 12:50 PM
To: JUDtestimony
Subject: HB1635

Committee on Judiciary
Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair
Rep. Ken Ito, Vice Chair
Tuesday, February 17, 2009
2:00 p.m.
Room 325

I strongly oppose HB1635 inasmuch as it adversely affects me directly. I have severe degenerative spinal arthritis. Pain relievers either leave me ill or the side effects affect my breathing. Cannabis helps me a great deal without having the debilitating side effects of other pain relievers.

If anything, the eligible categories for medical use of cannabis should be extended as its therapeutic applications are discovered. Arguments based on smoking need not apply since there are other modes of administration, some of which are in standard use in England and Canada currently.

Sincerely,

Bob Doke

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