HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE, 2014 STATE OF HAWAII

30

H.R. NO. 189

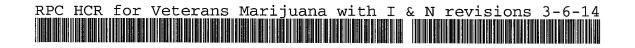
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR A REPORT ON VETERANS' ACCESS TO MEDICAL MARIJUANA.

1 WHEREAS, the men and women in the armed forces in America are willing to risk their lives defending our freedom, 2 3 demonstrating great courage and commitment to this country; and 4 5 WHEREAS, these brave defenders of democracy face tremendous 6 pressure and are exposed to traumatic events that can negatively affect their mental health; and 7 8 9 WHEREAS, one of the most challenging mental health issues that many veterans must address is posttraumatic stress disorder 10 11 (PTSD), which can result in night terrors, insomnia, feelings of emptiness, unusual bouts of anger or irritability and a general 12 13 loss of interest in activities that they used to enjoy; and 14 15 WHEREAS, approximately 20% of the veterans returning from 16 recent wars have been diagnosed as suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder and nearly 300,000 veterans have been diagnosed 17 with PTSD according to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); 18 19 and 20 WHEREAS, the number of veterans that may be suffering from 21 22 PTSD is likely much greater than 300,000 as many veterans may 23 not report their symptoms, and are thus not formally diagnosed nor receiving any treatment; and 24 25 WHEREAS, large numbers of veterans are self-medicating 26 27 their PTSD with marijuana because they feel it is more effective 28 in treating their symptoms than medications they have been 29 prescribed by physicians; and



1 WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs' psychiatrists 2 are not able to prescribe medical marijuana to veterans because 3 it is a Schedule 1 substance and as such, VA psychiatrists are 4 not authorized to prescribe it or even to fill out a 5 registration card; and 6 7 WHEREAS, the primary care physicians for many, if not most, veterans are part of the VA system; and 8 9 10 WHEREAS, some doctors, such as Dr. Raphael Mechoulam, have 11 studied the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes in treating PTSD and found that it helps with "memory extinction"; and 12 13 14 WHEREAS, "memory extinction" is the positive side of memory 15 loss that occurs from smoking cannabis which, for veterans, is 16 helpful because it causes a break in the association they have formed between traumatic events and other stimulation that set 17 18 off their PTSD; and 19 20 WHEREAS, there are many states that have approved the use 21 of medical marijuana for the treatment of PTSD including: 22 California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Mexico and Oregon; 23 and 24 25 WHEREAS, strains of marijuana have been developed in Israel that have markedly elevated levels of specific pharmacologically 26 27 active substances such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), 28 cannabinoid and cannabinoids (CBDs); and 29 30 WHEREAS, availability of these different strains would 31 potentially facilitate the care of both veterans and nonveterans 32 with PTSD and other disorders; and 33 34 WHEREAS, nonveterans who are certified for medical marijuana use may have difficulty growing their own marijuana 35 36 and may benefit from being able to purchase medical marijuana; 37 and 38 39 WHEREAS, growing cooperatives are allowed by law in 40 California; and 41



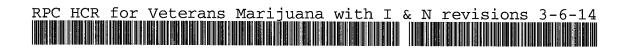
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WHEREAS, if the classification of marijuana changes from a 1 2 Schedule 1 drug to a Schedule 2 drug, VA doctors can treat veterans suffering from PTSD with medical marijuana without 3 4 fearing consequences from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which currently might include losing their jobs, their 5 6 licenses or even facing criminal charges; and 7 WHEREAS, the stress of growing their own marijuana may 8 9 exacerbate the symptoms of PTSD and other anxiety disorders in 10 veterans; and 11 12 WHEREAS, homelessness is a huge and growing problem in Hawaii and veterans are disproportionately represented among the 13 homeless; and 14 15 WHEREAS, cooperatives could and perhaps should be 16 17 established for homeless veterans to both live in and grow 18 marijuana to treat their mental health issues; and 19 20 WHEREAS, allowing veterans to grow marijuana in groups or cooperatives would provide for social support, housing and a 21 22 source of income; and 23 24 WHEREAS, veterans who live on these rural cooperatives can 25 grow or raise much of their own food in addition to growing 26 marijuana; and 27 28 WHEREAS, there is a "Veterans to Farmers" training program 29 being developed at the University of Hawaii in Hilo to help 30 veterans through both hands-on training for growing food and 31 through classroom curriculum on business management; and 32 WHEREAS, the "Veterans to Farmers" program can be a 33 34 reference point for creating the veterans cooperative laid out 35 in this resolution; and 36 37 WHEREAS, it might be beneficial for the cooperatives to: 38 39 (1) Be set up in rural or agricultural areas; 40 41 (2) Be exempt from requiring special permits;



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| 2 | (3) | Allow for multiple dwellings on the agricultural | |
| 3 | | parcels to provide home for veterans, including housing | |
| 4 | | for homeless veterans; and | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | (4) | Give the veterans living on these cooperatives the | |
| 7 | | ability to grow their own food in addition to | |
| 8 | | marijuana; and | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | (5) | The ability to sell extra marijuana to other veterans | |
| 11 | | and non-veterans who are appropriately registered; and | |
| 12 | | | |
| 13 | (6) | The ability to receive individual and group therapy | |
| 14 | | onsite; and | |
| 15 | | | |
| 16 | (7) | Possibly incorporate a care home and a hospice | |
| 17 | | facility for veterans on the facility; and | |
| 18 | | | |
| 19 | (8) | Allow for multiple homes on the property which will | |
| 20 | | enhance the safety and security of the collective | |
| 21 | | now, therefore, | |
| 22 | | | |
| 23 | BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the | | |
| 24 25 | Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular | | |
| 25 26 | Session of 2014, that this body asks the Department of Health, | | |
| 20 27 | the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Hawaii State | | |
| 28 | Department of Agriculture, the School of Pharmacy at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, the John A. Burns School of | | |
| 20 29 | Medicine, Tripler Military Hospital and other appropriate | | |
| 30 | stakeholders each to submit a report of their respective | | |
| 31 | findings and recommendations, including any proposed | | |
| 32 | legislation, to the Legislature, not later than twenty days | | |
| 33 | prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2015, with | | |
| 34 | regards to: | | |
| 35 | | | |
| 36 | (1) | The enactment and implementation of federal legislation | |
| 37 | / | to: | |
| 38 | | | |
| 39 | | (A) Facilitate veterans' access to medical marijuana | |
| 40 | | for the treatment of PTSD and other severe anxiety | |
| 41 | | disorders; and | |
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| 2 | (B) Enable physicians with the United States |
| 3 | Department of Veterans Affairs to prescribe |
| 4 | medical marijuana to Veterans; and |
| 5 | mearear marrjuana co vecerans, and |
| 6 | (2) The most offersting methods and the mean during |
| - | (2) The most effective methods, and the procedures |
| 7 | necessary, to establish cooperatives where homeless |
| 8 | veterans may live and grow marijuana for medical |
| 9 | purposes; and |
| 10 | |
| 11 | BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this |
| 12 | Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and the |
| 13 | United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs |
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RPC HCR for Veterans Marijuana with I & N revisions 3-6-14

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OFFERED BY:

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