

Jennifer's Testimony, 4/3/15

Okay I want to start by quantifying something before I get started. When you look for a grower, just like if you're looking for a physician, or a caregiver, or even a person who is going to be close to your life, and be part of your care you need to look diligently. I would even suggest that any family members be a part of that if they're a part of your daily support system. Because there are some people, just like everywhere in the healthcare industry that are not as good as others. And they're even people out there, just like caregivers that unfortunately take advantage. So having said that I'll say this: I am extremely lucky in that I had only one bad experience with my previous grower for about a year and then started to search for a new grower and found Megan. She has been my grower now for the last three years, and is just imperative to my care.

The second misnomer that I wanted to clear up is that with an appropriate grower they are not making money on their patients at all. Guess how much I put out a month to my grower? Zero. I'm a disabled person, and the entirety of my income with caregivers and everything is \$825 a month. I save all year long to pay fees to the State that has been somewhere between \$200 and \$300 a year for my medical marijuana privileges. I'm not one of the people that wanted recreational marijuana passed. Because it was my sincere hope that the medical community would research further my medicine before they took it and made it into hooch. Just like I have no money to go to the liquor store to buy something that's destructive for me like alcohol, I am not going to have the funds to go to a dispensary and get the amount of medicine that I need, and still be able to eat, and still be able to have electricity. Even now there is no money left at the end of my month.

Furthermore Megan has been in my life now like I had said for three years. This is not to say that I don't have any Western Doctor support that is totally essential. This is not a replacement of Western medicine, but added to it makes a difference of a lifetime. It makes a difference in steps. It makes a difference in how many days a week I get up. It makes the difference of me being able to do the simplest things; like spend time with my grandchildren and my children. And be able to have a conversation with them because I'm not in so much pain that just hearing another voice sends every nerve in my body out the window. So I was just pinned down on my bed stuck with whatever's in my head. I'm being held hostage to my pain.

First getting started I was surprised it was my son who got me to try Cannabis. He had to do a little bit of bullying because I was leery like probably many of you were, and a little bit scared. But just in that moment I went from being curled up like a baby just straightening out to sitting up on the couch. Three weeks later I had my medical marijuana license. Not only has medical marijuana offered me more comfort but it has offered me the opportunity to even thrive.

Before I got on the medical marijuana program I was on a huge amount of pain medication; including breakthrough pain medication. First, breakthrough medication went away because I didn't need it. Then my PTSD medication got cut in half from 7 to 3; and my staple pain medication has gone from 14 to 6. So again, I'm not saying that this replaces the necessity for Western medicine, but there is no current proof that marijuana does the kind of damage, long-term that those other opiate medications and different pain medications are going to cost me later on.

Megan comes to see me, generally if everything is okay, once a month. Very quickly right away she started to really research what was wrong with me. She then began to research strains that has shown to help in those areas, and then began to grow them for me, and uses them in the different products that she makes. A regular Western doctor has about a 15 minute window for you. When Megan comes she speaks to me for a good 45 minutes to an hour. In the plethora of products she makes and we try out, that are designed to just meet my needs. That's not just psychotropic flower. It is topical's, edibles, things like lotions, tincture oils, and fabulous Industrialized Hemp CBD drops. Products designed for places that it wouldn't be appropriate for me to medicate by using a vaporizer or pipe. She bakes medicinal marijuana brownies or cookies so that I will always have a way to access that medicine.

What it does is it gives me a pile of rocks that I can always access; we have a plan. And if that plan isn't working, I can call her and she will be out in the next day or two, not week or two, the next day or two. And she's putting her head together with different growers to try to get me out of crisis. We've been able to do that using cannabis. Unfortunately with the western medication, there are some people that have not taken their medicine appropriately because they are addictive and have ended up killing themselves. That isn't likely to happen with cannabis. You can't without a whole lot of energy put forth and incredible negligence. I don't know what the percentage list is, but it doesn't take a doctor to know that it's a lot harder to overdose and kill yourself using cannabis. Take for instance methadone, morphine or some of what they have to help with pain now, and like I said both things are still a necessity, but if we can cut down the number of opiate pain meds of what people are using, then it lowers the chance of getting a tolerance and it no longer being effective; it lessens the chance of overdosing. For people that are chronically ill and are not going to get better, they may even live a whole life until age 70 or (??). Medical cannabis works for breakthrough pain but has totally taken my pain, MINE, and cut it in half. If I did not have access to my medical marijuana, I don't know what I would do. I think that I have more steps that I take since I have started using medical marijuana. I had recovered from things that you're not supposed to recover from. It lowers blood sugar still being a diabetic and it's until just a month ago gave me two years of not having any diabetic medication. They put me on a list called in-active diabetic. Now I take one of two oral diabetic medications. The best example I can think of, and unfortunately we had great hopes for, but methadone I'm getting taken off of that right now and they put me in the 85% that I could just fall down dead from either accidental overdose, but more likely a heart defect. Until they can get me down to a very, very low number, like two, which would be like nothing (would be like aspirin). I, for safety reasons, can't take anything else. I have had my cannabis to turn to. Being taken off Methadone is when my diabetes kicked back in. I also have Graves' disease which is a disease of the thyroid. So I am looking forward to once we get that even again; which also hasn't been a problem for several years. And I'm looking forward to going back to not having to take diabetic medication again as well.

I have been fortunate that I've also had the same physician for six years. When I first became a patient she was very, very leery. We had a contract with each other; that if she felt that there was no benefit there and I was just using this as an excuse just to stay home and be blurry headed, that I agreed to give it away. But then what happened was what neither one of us expected. She has been able to see the effects and benefits of cannabis. I'm under a pain

contract with my doctor. I have given urine throughout the whole time that I've been on cannabis and my numbers have never come above inappropriately. What are the most telling experiences I've had of even Western medical people getting the big light bulb over their head. Before I started using medical marijuana, I had a blood sugar count in the 500's. Once I started taking medical marijuana, it took all of three months to get me down to normal blood sugars. Two months later my prescription by mouth medication list was taken away. A year later I was put on the list that said inactive diabetic. One day I was going out of my docs office and she stopped me; just wanted to flag me and say "Jennifer be careful with the cannabis, because it will cause your sugars to drop." Then she remembered my sugars were crazy high and she goes "oh! Never mind, I forgot that dropping your sugars is better for you," [in my case] and what was even better than that with her making that statement before I had gone down to a normal level.

I don't have enough time here to share with you all of the smaller problems that I have that have gone away as a result of using medical cannabis. I can tell you that it has been the only thing at some points that has allowed me to be able to eat. Before I would go a week and just not be able to eat. Now even if it's only half a sandwich I can get it down; that is crucial. I get good sleep; that is crucial. Without those two things, everything falls apart. So no pain, no diabetes, no nausea, good sleep and a proper support person who has worked harder than anybody else on my team to make sure that I have a program of using all the products she makes. She goes out and finds the strains that work for me; gets clones and plants them, gets them to grow for me and then we try it. If it works, great. If it doesn't work she scratches it and she goes back to the drawing board.

I am a person who uses this as medication. I am disabled and I live on disability like I spoke to in the beginning of my testimony. There is just no way I could walk into a dispensary and get what I needed for a month at recreational prices. I don't have the ability to go to the dispensary. I don't drive. I don't have somebody who could go for me on an all the time basis. I'm a very private person. The only reason I'm appearing today and sharing publicly about my situation is because it's looking like the access to my medicine may go away. I would not have the access I need to my medicine. Just like it would be no one's business what kind of medication I was on. This is my medication, so I don't want to ask a recreational pot head friend and tell them what it is that I needed. I should be able to continue to thrive. I should be content. I should be able to continue to have access to a relationship that keeps me at home, that keeps me out of the assisted living facility, and just give me a better quality of life. I can't tell you enough. Please, please don't make our medicine hooch. Don't do that. I never medicate with other people. I've only medicated by myself, in my home. Since this program started, there's been no trouble, because just like my western medical I have the protection of anonymity. I want to keep that amenity. It's part of my pride and every single person because we live in America should have access as long as it doesn't hurt others. Everyone should have the opportunity to thrive if they can. I am definitely one of those people. It's been proven in my calf numbers; it's been proven in the number of pills that I've taken, and that I take now. I paid the full amount to the appropriate State agencies, and so I feel like we're paying the taxes needed for my medicine. People are going to do what they want to do, fine. But please don't put us in the same category as people that are using it as their scotch for the night.

So again I just want to reiterate to you the people that there are good in this industry. They need to be sought out, just like any other good care provider. What's going to happen is our caregivers/ growers will go away and then the western medical system will take up the slack and I will be a more of a drain on the system.

I wish that they had kept it medical for a little bit longer. In Measure 91 you guys promised that you would not hurt sick people by taking away the OMMP. If you do that, anyone who voting on this, remember me sitting here today. Remember the look on my families faces. They were talking about taking away 50% of my support. Remember how scared we look and then guess what; know that you get to be responsible for that. I'm begging you to please just consider that at least for medical patients and their usage. So I'm just asking you please, please, please do not put me in the position to be a further burden. And please, please, please don't take away one of the hugest things that I have; and that's a relationship with somebody that really truly cares about me, not only getting out of pain, but being able to thrive. That isn't the goal. The goal isn't to just get out of pain. The goal is to get out of pain and stay out of pain so that you can go and do things in the community. So that you can do things that you were able to do before. And that's what I've been able to do. By saying no to the continuance of medical marijuana, you are saying that you do not want those things for me. Because that's what I got proven from my doctor who was leery, and now has gone to classes about medical marijuana because it was so surprising to her the benefits it can and has provided to one of her patients.

Even the psychiatric community is seeing what it does. I am a survivor of PTSD. The only reason that I share that is because it has had huge benefits for that condition. I don't have as many flashbacks. I sleep through the night. I am not being pressured into crisis mode. I'm using less psychiatric medication which consisted of mostly benzodiazepines.

I am just one person, but I hope I am one person with a loud voice when I say please do not hurt sick people. Please do not hurt people that are already in pain and already typing into the government pot. You promised that you wouldn't. Please keep your word.

Thank you

Jennifer Moore

Submitted 1/12/16 By Megan Graham

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