

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Kathleen Zinno, I am a 26-year-old OMMP patient. You have heard my testimony many times but I am sending this letter as a personal plea to carefully reexamine changes that will affect each patient. Medical and Recreational cannabis are not created equal and to put them under the same guidelines will drive truly medicinal patients back to the black market. Patients don't want to break laws, or cause more undue stress but when faced with the choice between death or seek help, many will do whatever it takes to end the suffering for themselves or loved ones. When all hope is lost, many will seek death and before you have these bodies on your hands please hear me out.

At 23 years, old the thought of death sounded like heaven, I contemplated requesting the lethal dose of medication (as with Oregon's Death with Dignity Act), or to simply let my next seizure take me out as I was barely cognitive enough to put up a fight. I had heard of cannabis before but never truly understood its full potential until I was at the point that all of my doctors agreed to do whatever it takes to make me comfortable (aka palliative care). Weekly doctor appointments, and threats of being put in a home by the state, I quickly filled out a Do Not Resuscitate order to stop any and all life saving measures, by all accounts I was done living. I was unable to be by myself for any length of time due to the risk of seizure or a fall, I couldn't manage my money or daily living expectations (ex. Cooking, cleaning, remembering daily hygiene routines etc.) requiring state paid caregivers to assist me with everything. I am a dual eligible patient, meaning I have both Medicare and Medicaid my income doesn't exceed \$700 a month with an additional \$50-\$150 in food stamps, with the current housing crisis and increased cost of living I could barely afford to live which only added to the appeal of not being around at all. My pain management doctor and primary care physicians both encouraged me to seek out medical cannabis as a way to ease some of my symptoms, I secured a medical card and sought out the cannabis that might help. This became an increasingly difficult endeavor as I found I reacted poorly to many strains causing anything from headache, nausea to anxiety and even a seizure once. Without knowing why this was happening I effectively gave up on seeking out the so-called "miracle plant" and was ok with simply smoking a joint or bowl to ease the nausea from trusted sources.

It wasn't until the kindness of a stranger that my eyes finally opened to the real miracle, I was introduced to Full Extract Cannabis Oil (a term used to describe a process in which the processor uses flower and trim to create a concentrated thick liquid, by using alcohol to extract the cannabinoids and carefully cooking it down as to remove the alcohol. Leaving only cannabinoids without added chemicals or processes). I remember trying my first capsule, I slept for the first time in what seemed like a lifetime a solid 12 + hours, in fact the first 2 weeks I was on this oil, only waking to eat (which was a miracle as well!) and use the restroom. After having 4 brain surgeries back-to-

back in 2013 sleep was what my body needed to start repairing itself and actual begin to heal.

Today I can confidently say that without F.E.C.O I would not be alive, the flip side to this is that if that oil was never donated to me in the first place by the kindness of multiple growers I would be dead. I've had over 14 surgeries in 26 years, 6 of them were brain surgeries that left me with permanent neurological damage. I suffer from a rare brain condition and a secondary genetic condition (Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome) that researchers are finding is caused by birth control and certain antibiotics, the condition is called Intracranial Hypertension. The only current treatment is 2 medications that affect the kidneys, spinal taps and brain surgery. Thousands of patients have begun to turn to cannabis to help relieve symptoms as many compare the pain to being stabbed in the head with a knife nonstop with no narcotic or other pain medication on the market providing relief. Many lose their vision or hearing due to the constant pressure on their brain, which is permanent. These patients are your parents, children, and grandparent who lived their lives until illness struck them, they didn't ask for this nor do they want anything more than to live freely again without pain. Oregon has been known as the compassionate state for these patients and hundreds of thousands like them, with patients across the country saving their pennies to seek safe haven in Colorado or Oregon for help. The proposed changes since Measure 91's passing has increasingly restricted the ability for these people to help themselves. Many can't afford FECCO or grow their own so they are reliant upon others to assist them, it's very expensive to grow and produce oil as it is not something that will fly off a shelf in any store. People who truly need cannabis oil, are in that position and have nothing left to give, if it weren't for the countless growers who grew before there was even a medical program in Oregon and who started this program in the first place and fought to help these people we would not be here today. Before Measure 91, growers could grow a surplus and have plenty to give away to help others, as you have continued to take away this ability patients have lost hope.

Washington state merged their programs effectively ending their medical program in 2016 with the passing on SB 5052, the thought was combining will allow ease of use and greater functionality. Instead recreational rules began to apply to medical which defeated the purpose of separating the two. I see Oregon going down this path and it breaks my heart, what am I supposed to say to the mom with kids on the east coast, saving what she can to get out here and establish on the medical program? Her only goal is to be a better mom, her state does not have an established program up and running yet so she holds out hope that one day she will have a day without pain so that she can be a part of her children's lives. What should I say to the grandmother down the street who doesn't drive and lives on social security trying to manage her symptoms? Or the cancer patient who just wants the ability to eat and enjoy time outside of the hospital? These are the reasons we are even in this room today discussing this, the entire purpose of the OMMP was patients helping patients get better and thrive. In Washington now it's nearly impossible to find even DRY FLOWER that is not THC heavy, or any medicinal products in the state. With increasing fees and threats of shutting down those who had the \$100,000+ to invest on the recreational side trying

to still be a part of the process they can't afford to help anyone for free, nor are they allowed to. Patients are allowed to grow, but few have the money or ability to do so leaving them with few choices than to seek black market cannabis or leave the state completely.

Oregon has the option to be the pillar for medical patients, and continue to be known as the compassionate state, I plead with you again to re-examine these changes and imagine you are in my shoes and thousands of others like me who depend on this plant for their life. If anything, you should be creating special provisions for patients like myself who require copious amounts of cannabis that is than turned into oil, or edibles that allows us to function like human beings instead of being trapped in a hospital or at home.

For patients like me, we are considered Large Quantity Consumers, to manage my diseases it takes $\frac{3}{4}$ lb of cannabis a day to mitigate my symptoms during a flare-up, this is what it takes to get me out of bed and able to drive, walk, talk function and even work, most recreational issuers will not consume that amount in 6 months. Before the increased limits, I was able to access more flower and concentrates that allowed me to get off of social services for a brief time and work in 2015, 2016 and part of 2017. As I age my conditions will continue to deteriorate my body creating the need for more medicine that needs to be adjusted in both amounts and types of cannabis grown to help. If you put more restrictions on growers and not allowing them to only get fairly paid for their work, by encouraging them to focus on recreational, why would anyone spend thousands of dollars a harvest to help someone like me? I've had hundreds of thousand dollars' worth of product donated to me over the course of several years, and it's only because these people decided my life was worth saving because I had a story share with people like you. What about the patients who can't speak for themselves? Do you condemn them to death because they aren't able to fight here today? I am only one voice, but I am here on behalf of the patients in Oregon and across the world looking at Oregon as a safe haven for deciding to live or die. Give us the chance to make that decision on our own.

I'm requesting that the committee hold off on making ANY changes to the OMMP and consider implementing a provision for Large Quantity Consumers, for both the patients and the growers/caregivers assisting them. This will allow thousands of patients the access they need without fear of shortages that have been happening as of late with the current rules. I went from not worrying about running out of medicine to learning how to stretch it out and learn to do less when I have less oil, could you imagine being forced to do that with insulin or your seizure medication?

Last year I ran out of my cannabis oil, I thought I would be ok supplementing with different quality products from recreational stores. It took 8 days for me to go from being up all day and working, to lying in bed unable to keep food down, having auras (pre-seizure warning signs). 8 days from functional to flat, that's all it took, the recreational markets did not have anything even CLOSE to what I needed specifically for my conditions. Over \$300 spent and it hardly made dent, even taking 10x the normal

amount of what I was consuming before. The difference to patients like me between recreational and medical is truly life and death. Beyond that by focusing on profits you drive a wedge between the sanctity of the plant and the people. Until patients can access their medicine at free to low cost, or grow their own with no concerns about impending jail time, kids being taken away or lose their job they will continue to fight for the access to clean, affordable medicine and support for those who choose to help.

Thank you for your time, please listen to the people and think about if your own family member became very ill and traditional medicine couldn't help you. What would you do? Cannabis has allowed me to dream and try again, give more people that chance, don't take away their last hope to dream.

Kathleen Zinno

please free to email with any questions or feedback- kzinno11@gmail.com

more information about Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome visit www.oreds.org (Oregon EDS Website)

www.ednf.org (National EDS Website)

Intracranial Hypertension Info- www.ihrf.org (IH Research Foundation located at OHSU)

Hypermobility

Soft skin

Muscle spasms

Chiari

Dislocations

Mitral valve prolapse

Prolapse

Chronic degenerative joint disease

Fatigue

Osteoarthritis

Osteoporosis

PAIN

Gastrointestinal Issues

Swan neck Deformity

POTS

Sprains

Ehlers Danlos Syndrome

TMJ

Atrophic Scarring

**Learn the signs
Spread the word**

IBS

Organ Rupture

www.ednf.org

Flat Feet

www.edsawarenessproject.com

FB you know you have EDS when

Arthralgia

Easy Bruising

MIGRAINES

Aneurysms

Subluxations

Slow healing

Skin tearing

Gastritis

Dysautonomia

PRETERM LABOR



lost over 50lbs!! 4 brain surgery survivor!!

Top- Rally in Salem 2 years ago

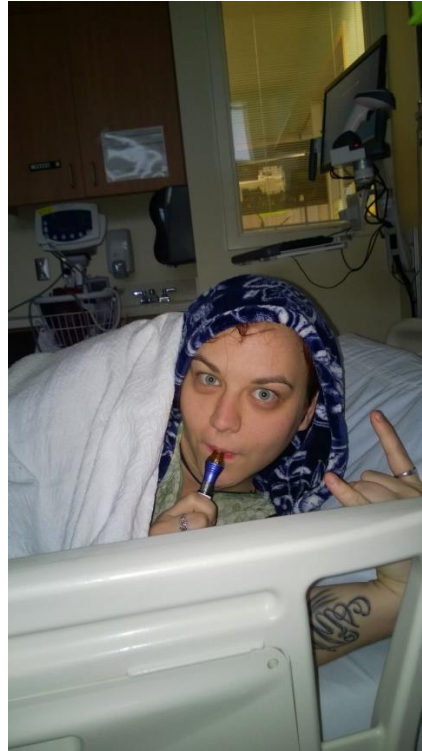
Bottom- Pictured before the first brain surgery, than 4 surgeries later.



Top Left- 6th brain surgery last year in Ohio, I had my shunt finally removed because I found a doctor willing to let me try to manage my disease only using Cannabis oil. I've been given emergency diuretics and a neurosurgeon on speed dial to put the shunt back in if the oil stops working, but nearly 1 year after this procedure and I am holding steady.

Top right- Right side weakness after four brain surgeries

Bottom- First brain surgery picture.



The picture on the left is from 2013, when I developed a staph infection after 2 brain surgeries, requiring 2 more brain surgeries. I had a tube going from my brain to this device that helped drain and collect CSF fluid, I called it the \$15,000 sterile straw, which is essentially what it was.

The picture on the right is my 5th brain surgery, I began to stop breathing shortly after surgery due to the pain medications. After so many surgeries and developed allergies the hospital staff has trouble controlling my pain after waking up, if they bring me out of pain completely I stop breathing. So after becoming an OMMP patient I started using cannabis upon waking up. My last knee surgery (Nov 2016), I was able to hobble out of the hospital with a cane after only 2 hours post surgery.



Here I am standing today (this is 2 weeks after my 3rd knee surgery Dec 2016)

RAISING AWARENESS FOR
**IDIOPATHIC INTRACRANIAL
HYPERTENSION**

A CONDITION THAT MIMICS A LARGE BRAIN TUMOR

Multiple Lumbar Punctures

hearing loss

optic

atrophy

total vision
loss

shoulder/neck
pain

back pain

pulsatile tinnitus

topamax

increased
csf
pressure



IIH

hemorrhaging
optic nerves

loss of
coordination

VP/LP
shunt

diamox

papilledema

chronic migraine

Cerebral
Spinal Fluid

Multiple
Brain Surgeries

visual impairment

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