
From: laird
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2017 2:23 PM
To: JMR Exhibits
Subject: HB 2198

To the Committee Chair and members:

My name is Laird Funk, I live in Williams, Oregon. I have been involved in the medical marijuana field politically since 1993 when Senator Roberts introduced a bill I authored laying out essentially the structure for what in 1998 became the Oregon Medical Marijuana Act passed by the voters.

I was a long-time member of the original ACMM including holding the position of Chair and I have watched as OHA has been unresponsive to advice from the ACMM in ways to improve patient access and service. Even though the ACMM was formed by the legislature to advise the OHA director on the administration of the OMMP, the perceived attitude has been that not having asked for advice the OHA director was free to ignore it. OHA has been slow to adopt changes in forms and protocol for the patient application process sometimes taking months to change a simple form. Until lately OHA has consistently been late in issuing cards and forcing patients to wait for as long as three months, far exceeding the 30 period allowed by statute.

OHA has historically neglected issues important to patients and has failed to take any action to address pain management contracts, workplace drug policy or the seeking legislative of authority to make changes and using that lack of authority as an excuse for continued inaction.

OHA has repeatedly proposed and adopted rules that were contrary to legislative intent and increased fees for patients when it was clear enough revenue was being generated to not only administer the program but to increase patient services. The fact OMMP is funding six other unrelated programs from the artificial surplus revenue has caused most patients to believe that the state cynically views the OMMP, and by extension them, as a cash cow but only gives lip service to the patients' program while seemingly ignoring it until it withered and died on the vine.

HB 2198 addresses these shortfalls by developing a long-term strategic plan for ensuring the OMMP will remain in place for future patients and ongoing for those now in the program. HB 2198 will also require biennial reports back to the legislature on important issues like patient access to medical cannabis, the efficacy of different strains on different conditions establishing a low-income patient fund, patient needs that are on probation or parole and the impact of federal regulations on medical use of marijuana.

I support HB 2198 and urge the committee to move the bill to the floor with a Do Pass recommendation.

Thank you for your attention.

Signed,

Laird Funk, 15680 Williams Hwy., Williams, Oregon 97544