

OPEN LETTER TO HOUSE AND SENATE COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES SUB-COMMITTEES AND THE COMMITTEES ON APPROPRIATIONS:

PROTECT MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAMS AND THE 6 MILLION PATIENTS THEY SERVE

Chairman Hal Rogers, Ranking Member Grace Meng, Chairman Jerry Moran, Ranking Member Chris Van Hollen, Chairman Tom Cole, Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman Susan Collins, Vice Chair Patty Murray, and Honorable Members of the Committees:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, representing millions of Americans who depend on state-authorized medical cannabis programs, urge you to extend the critical protections in the FY2026 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations bill until Congress creates a permanent solution to align federal medical cannabis policy with state laws.

Since 2014, bipartisan Congressional action has protected patients, caregivers, state regulators, and legitimate cannabis businesses from federal prosecution, arrest, asset forfeiture, and harassment. The Medical Cannabis CJS Amendment, also referred to as the Rohrabacher-Farr Amendment, serves as a crucial safeguard, preventing interference by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in states with medical cannabis programs. President Trump's proposed FY2026 budget omits these longstanding protections, which would put the health of more than six million Americans and those who support their treatment at risk.

Forty states, the District of Columbia, and four U.S. territories have passed laws creating medical cannabis programs to provide a regulated pathway for individuals living with chronic pain, epilepsy, PTSD, multiple sclerosis, chemotherapy-induced nausea, and other severe medical conditions to access cannabis medicines under the care of their healthcare providers. The removal of these federal protections would subject patients and the programs they rely upon to unacceptable uncertainty and harm.

Medical cannabis patients are living with one or more medical conditions or experiencing symptoms for which cannabis or a cannabinoid-based product may be the only treatment option, a more suitable option, or work as an adjunct treatment, including side-effect mitigation from other medications in their treatment plans. Patients consistently report improved symptom relief, better daily functioning, and enhanced mental health with access to medical cannabis.

Medical cannabis programs have become a lifeline for millions of Americans, including many of the 30 million Americans living with one of 7,000 known rare diseases (95% of which have no FDA-approved treatment available) as well as the one-third of Americans who live with chronic pain and the 10% of Americans living with debilitating, intractable pain. In fact, research generated from the state programs suggests medical cannabis may help some patients reduce or avoid certain high-risk medications, including opioids, contributing to lower rates of overdose and medication-related complications.



Over the last decade, significant barriers to cannabis reform have been dismantled. Advocates have successfully championed regulatory changes enabling U.S.-based cannabis research, debunked outdated misconceptions in federal agencies, changed the scheduling of cannabis under United Nations treaties, established rigorous safety standards, and demonstrated clear medical benefits recognized by the FDA.

You have the power to protect the health, safety, and dignity of millions of Americans. Until comprehensive, permanent federal legislation is enacted to align federal cannabis policy with state laws and integrate medical cannabis into mainstream healthcare, maintaining the Medical Cannabis CJS Amendment is essential.

We respectfully request your active participation in ensuring these vital protections are renewed in the FY2026 budget. Millions of patients are counting on your leadership.

Sincerely,

Steph Sherer, Founder & Executive Director
Americans for Safe Access

Stephen Dahmer, MD, Director
Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine

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Bonni Goldstein, MD
Goldstein Wellness

Michelle Novack, Caregiver & Parent

Karen Jaynes, Integrative Health Professional

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Mary Lynn Mathre, RN President
Patients Out of Time

Americans for Safe Access
Safe Access Tennessee

A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)

AIDS Action Baltimore

AIDS Foundation Chicago

AIDS United

The Advanced Integrative Medical Science (AIMS) Institute

American Cannabis Nurses Association

American Herbal Products Association (AHPA)

American Legion Blue Sky Post 426

Americans for Safe Access, Michigan Chapter

Bay Area Chapter of Americans for Safe Access

Cannabis Business for National Medical Cannabis

Caregivers for National Medical Cannabis

Coalition for Medical Marijuana-New Jersey, Inc.

Epilepsy Foundation of America

Global Cannabis Network Collective

Georgia Medical Cannabis Society

Hemp for Victory

Holistic Carings

International Society of Cannabis Pharmacists

International Cannabis Bar Association
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Minority Cannabis Business Association

Minorities for Medical Marijuana

Montel Media, Inc.

National Clinical Director Consortium

National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Nebraskans for Medical Marijuana

Parkinson's Association of Northern California

Patients Out of Time

Pharmacists' Cannabis Coalition of California (PCCC)

Realm of Caring

Rhode Island Patient Advocate Coalition (RIPAC)

Republican Cannabis Caucus

Safe Access Virginia

San Diego Chapter of Americans for Safe Access

SC Compassionate Care Alliance

Society of Cannabis Clinicians

State Officials of Connecticut

Texans for Safe Access

Tourette Association of America

Treatment Action Group

US Pain Foundation

Veterans Initiative 22