

# 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**

**Deondra Asike, MD**, Clinical Associate  
**Johns Hopkins School of Medicine**

**Melissa Chubbuck, MD**, Hospice Physician

**Bonni Goldstein, MD**  
**Goldstein Wellness**

**Michelle Novack**, Caregiver & Parent

**Karen Jaynes**, Integrative Health Professional

**Anton Harb Jr**, Disabled Veteran/1Lt (Ret) USA

**Graham Rigby**, President & CEO  
**American Herbal Products Association (AHPA)**

**Marshall Clabeaux**, Vice Chair  
**Republican Cannabis Caucus**

**David Hairston**, Chairman  
**Safe Access Tennessee**

**Gretchen Bergman**, Executive Director  
**A New PATH**

**Sunil Aggarwal, MD** Co-Founder  
**AIMS Institute**

**Brandy Zink**, Chair  
**Americans for Safe Access, Michigan Chapter**

**Leigh Vinocur, MD, MS**  
**Ananda Medical Practice**

**Sasha Kalcheff-Korn**, Executive Director  
**Realm of Caring**

**Heather Jackson** Founder, Board President  
**Realm of Caring Foundation**

**Jill Swing** President  
**SC Compassionate Care Alliance**

**Mark Harrington**, Executive Director  
**Treatment Action Group**

**Ellen and Stuart Smith**, Co-Directors  
**Cannabis Advocacy, US Pain Foundation**

**Yolanda Bennett**, Co-Founder  
**Georgia Medical Cannabis Society**

**Angela Weston**, Co-Founder  
**Georgia Medical Cannabis Society**

**Robert Head**, Chair  
**Hemp for Victory**

**Laurie Kappe**, President,  
i.e. Communications

**Erin Kirk**  
**Connecticut Cannabis Ombudsman**

**Ryan Vandrey, PhD**, Professor  
**Johns Hopkins School of Medicine**

**Shanetha Lewis**, Executive Director  
**Veterans Initiative 22**

**Rene Reisinger**, NP  
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**Anthony Bowles**, Chair  
**Bay Area Chapter of ASA**

**Michael Brennan**  
**CMM-New Jersey**

**Elisabeth Mack, RN**, Co-founder  
**Holistic Caring**

**Jennifer Bailey**, Founder  
**Homegrown4Heroes**

**Jeremiah MacKinnon**, Executive Director  
**MPPA**

**Eric Foster**, National Policy Director  
**M4MM**

**Laura Barrett, RN** Executive Director  
**National Clinical Director Consortium**

**Jan Whitney**, Executive Director  
**Parkinson's Association of N. California**

**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**