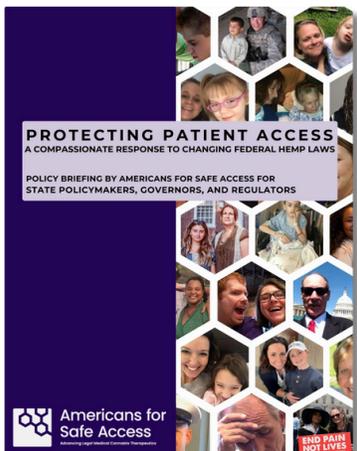


“Americans for Safe Access (ASA) has prepared this briefing to help state leaders navigate this moment with clarity, accuracy, and compassion... Effective responses must account not only for patients currently dependent on the unregulated hemp marketplace, but also for the conditions that made it their only viable option. Barriers such as cost, access deserts, and limited product availability, driven by competition for shelf space in adult-use markets, left patients with few options.” -**Steph Sherer, Founder & Executive Director**



PROTECTING PATIENT ACCESS

A COMPASSIONATE RESPONSE TO CHANGING FEDERAL HEMP LAWS

POLICY BRIEFING BY AMERICANS FOR SAFE ACCESS FOR STATE POLICYMAKERS, GOVERNORS, AND REGULATORS

On November 12, 2025, Congress amended hemp laws in H.R. 5371—the Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026 by establishing statutory definitions for “industrial hemp” and “hemp-derived cannabinoid products” and imposing a new “total THC” standard. Together, when they go into effect on November 11, 2026, these clarifications will close the “loophole” that allowed unregulated intoxicating products to proliferate—but they will also remove most full-spectrum cannabinoid products from lawful commerce, cutting off access for millions of patients who rely on these products as their medicine.

Across the country, seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, cancer patients, children with rare diseases, and people living with chronic pain rely on full-spectrum cannabinoid products purchased from the hemp market. These are not casual consumers. They are patients who turned to hemp because state medical cannabis programs were unavailable, unaffordable, geographically inaccessible, or stripped of the products they need. In many states, adult-use product demand crowded out high-CBD and non-intoxicating formulations. For millions of patients, products from the hemp market filled a gap, even if by default.

The briefing explains how the current crisis emerged, who is at risk, why President Trump’s December 2025 Executive Order will not prevent the pending disruption, and why states on the front lines must act to address patient access or risk another public health crisis.

“From a pharmacological standpoint, the ‘hemp products’ patients are taking to treat medical conditions are medical cannabis. Patients chose hemp products because they were told they were legal—and like medical cannabis, they worked. The hemp market filled a gap that our medical cannabis laws left wide open.”- **Dr. Codi Peterson, PharmD, pediatric pharmacist and cannabis science educator.**

THE BRIEFING INCLUDES:

- A clear explanation of the new hemp provisions and their real-world impact
- Limitations of Trump’s Executive Order
- An analysis of why millions of patients depend on the hemp marketplace
- Data on who cannabinoid medicines serve
- Draft emergency legislation and executive actions to preserve access
- States’ role in a national medical cannabis program



EXCERPTS FROM THE BRIEFING:

NEW HEMP LAWS IMPACT PATIENTS NATIONWIDE



“For years, millions of Americans have accessed cannabinoid therapies through full-spectrum hemp products sold online and in retail shops. Patients who rely on hemp-derived cannabinoid medicine are sitting on a fragile lifeline. These aren’t “CBD customers.” These are people managing seizures, cancer symptoms, neuropathy, chronic pain, PTSD, autism, sleep disorders, and other chronic medical conditions.

Access for these patients will change in 2026. Without intervention, patients who already live at the margins of the healthcare system risk losing one of the few therapeutic options available to them.”



WHO ARE CANNABINOID MEDICINES HELPING

MEDICAL CANNABIS PATIENT-

[me-di-kəl ka-nə-bəs pā-shənt] n. a person living with a medical condition or experiencing symptoms for which cannabis or a cannabinoid-based therapeutic is the only treatment option, a more suitable option, or works as an adjunct treatment including side-effect mitigation to other available care options.

OUT OF STOCK

Over the past decade, the expansion of adult-use laws... (text continues)

DETERMINING IF CANNABIS IS AN OPTION FOR PAIN TREATMENT

68 million Americans are living with chronic pain. 80% of Americans live in a state with a medical cannabis program. (text continues)

THE MEDICAL CANNABIS & CANNABINOID ACT

The Medical Cannabis and Cannabinoid Act (MCCA) offers a path forward for cannabis medicines that honors both the scientific understanding and the experiences of millions of Americans. (text continues)

MEET JOSE BELLEN

Jose Bellen is a decorated United States Army combat aviator. (text continues)

MEET MICHELLE & VIN

Michelle describes her 20-year-old son as a grown man who still sometimes bellys up with adult... (text continues)

THE ROLE OF STATES IN PROTECTING PATIENT ACCESS

Hemp reform exposed both the necessity and the difficulty of navigating fragmented authority—USDA rules layered onto state agriculture laws, FDA jurisdiction without a viable product pathway, DEA enforcement ambiguity, and states left to manage the downstream consequences for patients and consumers.

TRANSITIONING TO A NATIONAL PROGRAM

The Medical Cannabis and Cannabinoid Act (MCCA) offers a path forward for cannabis medicines that honors both the scientific understanding and the experiences of millions of Americans. The last step in this decades-long experiment is for Congress to act, and this patchwork of state laws, born out of prohibition, will become the foundation of a national medical cannabis program built on evidence, access, and patient rights.

THE OFFICE OF MEDICAL CANNABIS & CANNABINOID CARE

The establishment of the Office of Medical Cannabis and Cannabinoid Care... (text continues)

NATIONAL MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM ROLE OUT-PHASE I

First 60 days... (text continues)

LABORATORIES OF DEMOCRACY: THE 30-YEAR STATE MEDICAL CANNABIS EXPERIMENT

An Analysis of Lessons from the State Medical Cannabis Experiment & the Forums for National Access. (text continues)

LABORATORIES OF DEMOCRACY

Taken together, three steps drive... (text continues)

LABORATORIES OF DEMOCRACY

A federal medical cannabis program should not start from scratch—it should build upon state progress, restore patients' federal rights, enable interstate commerce, and integrate cannabis into modern healthcare.

DRAFT EMERGENCY STATE LEGISLATION/EXECUTIVE ACTION

- Preserve access to non-intoxicating cannabinoid medicines;
- Ensure products meet medical-grade safety and testing standards and are accurately labeled;
- Stabilize supply before federal changes take effect;
- Give patients, providers, and regulators time to adjust responsibly; and
- Address the systemic barriers that have prevented patients from utilizing state programs.

DRAFT EMERGENCY STATE LEGISLATION

PROTECTING ACCESS TO CANNABINOID MEDICINES ACT OF 2026

DRAFT EXECUTIVE ORDER: EMERGENCY RULE MAKING

PROTECT PATIENT ACCESS TO CANNABINOID MEDICINES

This briefing has been designed to equip state leaders with the tools they need for a compassionate response to the changing federal hemp laws that will protect current and future patient access.

