



Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis
Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT, 2600

The Moderator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014

Dear Committee Delegates,

We support the licensing of growers, manufactures, processors and distribution chains (dispensaries). We believe the psychoactive ingredient THC should be included, yet differentiated from all other cannabinoids and limited to new licensing methods. All other forms of cannabis oil (high CBD, low THC) should be allowed as a health food/ dietary supplement (as is the case in numerous European countries) under existing food, nutrition and claims/ labeling laws as in existence through the Food Authority and Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Existing licensing/ legislation allows import of high CBD and high THC plants and extracts. It is the intended use that needs to be adapted by the Regulator. Labeling of high THC and high CBD need to be defined based on NSW clinical trials, the hundreds of clinical trials globally, the evidence from Physicians who have been prescribing these products, the industry already in existence and the general public who have been using such products illegally for many years.

Qualifications:

- CEO of the largest industrial hemp food manufacturing facility in the Southern Hemisphere, based in NSW where we manufacture, pack and distribute products for Australia and export throughout the world.
- Author of 9 books on Industrial Hemp
- Experience working with Canberra head office for Department of Health, DAFF, Department of Trade And Investment and Customs.
- CEO of Elixinol LLC – a US based company that manufactures and legally distributes non-psychoactive medicinal cannabis oil from industrial hemp – low THC plants
- License to import cannabis products into Australia from various countries
- 20 years of experience working with Industrial Hemp in Europe, Asia, China and North America that leads me to know and trade with many of the largest industrial hemp growers in the world, including in Australia





- Relationships with some of the world's most experienced seed breeders (for medicinal relevant strains). One of these seed breeders has offered to bring the genetics to Australia for us to use when the time is relevant
- Close working relationships with two Doctor's (overseas) who have been treating people with medicinal cannabis and have been advising on specific dosages for specific ailments. One of these Doctor's is an employee - Medical Director of the majority Australian owned Elixinol LLC.
- Co-author of an application for clinical trials within Australia to research the benefits of medicinal cannabis for the NSW Government
- Various other Joint Venture Agreements working in the clinical research and study of medicinal cannabis worldwide
- Given an exemption to the legislation to transport and process cannabis flowers into medicinal cannabis in NSW. With the main condition be the resultant medicine be exported only.

With my qualifications I feel confident to make the following points:

- 1) There is significant knowledge of medicinal cannabis globally. This includes double blind, placebo controlled human trials. In fact, we have over 1000 pages of clinical research studies.
- 2) Colorado – one single state of the USA with a population of 5.3 million people, has raised so much surplus tax in the last year they have just agreed to refund \$54 million to all taxpayers. That would be like giving the population of Australia an extra \$225 million in their pockets, because we sold too much medical hemp oil. Public perception is likely to support that.
- 3) According to Uniform Crime Reporting data for Denver, there has been a 10.1% decrease in overall crime from this time last year and a 5.2% drop in violent crime. This trend has been reported in other US states that have legalised medicinal cannabis. Australian Police and Public are likely to support that.
- 4) Colorado garnered over \$10 million in taxes from retail sales in the first 4 months. The first \$40 million of this tax revenue is earmarked for public schools and infrastructure, as well as for youth educational campaigns about substance use. Australian State Governments are likely to support that.
- 5) The marijuana industry has developed quickly, generating thousands of new jobs. It is estimated there are currently about 10,000 people directly involved





with this industry, with 1,000 to 2,000 gaining employment in the past few months alone. All Australians are likely to support that.

6) By removing criminal penalties for certain marijuana-related offences, thousands of individuals will avoid the collateral consequences associated with a criminal record. The state is estimated to potentially save \$12-40 million over the span of a year simply by ending arrests for marijuana possession. Thus reducing potential for such 'criminals' to enter into other crimes by avoiding contact with the underground world. Australian families would welcome that.

7) Comparison between safety of Marijuana and currently "legal" drugs:

46 people die every day from legal painkillers

double the entire population of Sydney dies each year from legal alcohol consumption

after 4 thousand years of consumption, zero have died directly from

Cannabis

Department Of Health are likely to support that.

8) In 1994 the Australian Government prepared a report on Cannabis Prohibition. According to the report: "We conclude that Australian society experiences more harm from maintaining prohibition policy than it experiences from the use of the drug" Ref: <http://adlrf.org.au/cannabis-law-refor/>

9) In USA, 3 million people suffer Epilepsy (250,000 in Australia). Approx. 396,000 Americans die suddenly from Epilepsy each year - equal to the number of people who die from breast cancer or traffic accidents. As early as the 1970s, randomised double-blind, placebo-controlled human clinical trials (Cuhna et al. 1980) with CBD proved it to be a highly effective treatment for Epilepsy and that even when a dose (in animals) 5000 times greater than what is required to stop seizures is taken - no harm results. Epileptic patients and families are likely to support that.

10) Anecdotal evidence is abundant. We have seen over 10,000 patient histories documented for various symptoms. Many sick people will support that.

11) Numerous positive results of the 'underground use' of medicinal cannabis in Australia. We have seen Epilepsy being cured, those on their death bed 'waking up' and brain tumors shrunk in Australia. Australians already support this.

12) Our research and existing peer-reviewed clinical data from around the world has shown that whole plant extracts are far superior and offer less side effects than synthetic and/or isolated molecules, such as CBD alone. The growing Natural Products Industry will likely support that.





- 13) There are some ailments where high THC is useful. Medical Practitioners and patients will support that.
- 14) There can be two forms of medical cannabis: one with and one without the psychoactive properties of THC. Legislators are likely to support that.
- 15) Legislation for low THC industrial hemp (defined in NSW as less than 1% THC) may easily be adapted into the new proposed food standard laws being considered by the COAG's Forum. Industry are likely to support that.
- 16) Legislation for high THC industrial hemp or medical cannabis may be regulated in a fashion similar to the USA where producers are licensed to manufacture and 'dispensaries' are licensed to distribute to those with a license to use. There may also be licenses for research and production.
- 17) The Regulator may consider accurate record keeping for production, transport and distribution as per the methods used successfully in the USA. We will support that.
- 18) Licenses may be created by the proposed Regulator for high THC medicinal cannabis and be given by a Medical Practitioner
- 19) No licenses are required if the THC content is below a globally accepted level (where the material is non-psychoactive, approximately 0.3%), allowing for free trade in non-psychoactive hemp oil.
- 20) Any claims for the use of any products (high or low in THC) be approved by the Regulator or TGA. The TGA already do this.
- 21) The knowledge on all of these issues already exists in Australia. We will support the sharing of this knowledge to the suggested Regulator.

May I conclude by offering some testimonials received from consumers of Elixinol products. This is not a public document, but for the Senate's information:

<http://www.elixinol.com/elixinol-testimonials.pdf>

Yours sincerely

Paul Benhaim
CEO, Elixinol LLC
CEO, Hemp Foods Australia Pty Ltd

