

Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014 Submission

Dear Senators,

Please accept this as my submission regarding the regulation of medicinal cannabis in Australia.

I am sure you are aware of the medical condition of April Tognoni. Please see below reference to an article on the Mercury newspaper website on-line.

<http://www.themercury.com.au/news/tasmania/cannabis-oil-a-life-changer-for-three-year-old-tasmanian-girl-who-suffered-chronic-seizures/story-fnj4f7k1-1227258847441>

I do not know April and her family, but one cannot help be moved by her situation and the fact that medicinal cannabis offers her physical relief from her medical problems.

One could argue that cases like April's are rare, and why should the law which acts to govern all of us be changed for just a few rare cases? To think in such a way would be the wrong approach. Not only are all individual lives important, but cases like April's show just how diverse the range of conditions are that medicinal cannabis can effectively treat. Some of humanity's most serious illnesses, such as aids, cancer, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy et al, can be treated and managed with medicinal cannabis.

It is bad enough that people suffer these conditions in the first place, but then to deny them relief and treatment that medicinal cannabis can provide only adds to their suffering. The medicinal use of cannabis has little serious, long-term side-effects and is so effective for people suffering serious conditions that many will buy it illegally and risk not only criminal prosecution, but also unknown mixtures and quantities. As the Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation makes clear, the distribution and regulation of medicinal cannabis by the medical community is the safest way of ensuring correct dosages for those who legitimately need to use it. Please see the link below to the Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation website regarding medicinal cannabis.

<http://adlrf.org.au/medical-cannabis/>

The recent response by the Tasmanian state government has been disappointing on this issue. The Hodgeman government has shown that fear of illicit use of marijuana is clouding the judgment of law-makers, as they frequently cite their fear of a rise in an illicit use of cannabis with medical use of cannabis. The two forms of cannabis are vastly different. Cannabis oil is a good example of the vast difference between the recreational form and medicinal form of the drug.

Please do not deny April and others in the community who need this important treatment. Please legalize medicinal cannabis.

Yours faithfully,

Ms. Stephanie Gleeson (LLB)