

Date: March 11, 2015

Dear Committee Members:

Firstly, I am buoyed by the fact that the Senate Committee is considering the 'Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill'. I believe it is a vital step in the right direction towards the safe and consistent provision of medicinal cannabis for those who will benefit from its medicinal qualities.

My nephew suffers from complex epilepsy, a condition that is not responding to current pharmaceutical drugs available to him despite being prescribed adult dosages (a practice that has not been proven to be safe through medical trials, however is prescribed anyway). Medical trials conducted around the world suggest that he may benefit from medicinal cannabis as it has the potential to help treat his seizures. Our family just want the opportunity to see if it helps.

While my opinion is influenced by my love of my nephew, I am not writing simply to tell you my personal story. I am writing to tell you of my experience of public opinion regarding the legalisation of medicinal cannabis. I recently participated in gathering public support for the legalisation of medicinal cannabis through the signing of a petition in the Brisbane CBD. While I personally support the legalisation of medicinal cannabis, I was surprised by the wide-ranging support for legalisation there is within the community. People, from young, to old, liberal and conservative, were more than happy to sign the petition stating their support for legalisation.

This public support is not only anecdotal. Prior to the recent Queensland election, the ABC provided 'Vote Compass', a series of questions designed to help people to discover how they fit in the political landscape. The results of the survey indicate that there is majority support within the community for legalisation:

*The largest poll of the voting public on the subject returned an emphatic verdict - three-quarters of the 69,196 respondents agreed with the idea of making marijuana legal for medicinal purposes.*

*There was a majority in favour among supporters of all the significant parties contesting Saturday's election.*

*There was also majority support within all age groups, religious groups and in both regional Queensland and the south-east corner.*

*(<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-01-28/most-queensland-voters-support-medical-marijuana-vote-compass/6049724>, accessed March 12, 2015)*

I hope the committee recognises that there is a public mandate to legalise medicinal cannabis and this Queensland survey is just one poll that evidences it. Medical trials have already shown its medicinal potential and any side effects surely cannot be any worse than pharmaceutical drugs already prescribed.

Sincerely,

Colleen Morgan