

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joe Pitts
Chair, Health Subcommittee
House Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green
Ranking Member, Health Subcommittee
House Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Grassley and Leahy and Representatives Pitts and Green:

On behalf of the patient community, we, the undersigned organizations, urge you to allow a committee vote for the **Compassionate Access, Research Expansion, and Respect States Act** (CARERS, S. 683, H.R. 1538) which would facilitate safe and legal access to medical cannabis for patients and physicians acting in accordance with state law and lift federal barriers to research.

Our organizations advocate for the millions of Americans living with the various severe and debilitating medical conditions that our organizations respectively represent. We have seen first-hand the devastation that these conditions can inflict upon patients and their loved ones. This is why we are committed to exploring and advocating for all potential treatment options, including medical cannabis for those individuals who could benefit from its therapeutic use.

The CARERS Act would lift barriers that have prevented medical cannabis research in the United States. Due to the onerous restrictions on cannabis, the U.S. is restricting innovation rather than cultivating it. Moving cannabis from Schedule I in the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) and ending the Drug Enforcement Agency-mandated National Institute on Drug Abuse monopoly on the research supply would lift major federal barriers to medical cannabis research. The CARERS Act would also remove low-THC cannabis from the CSA allowing individuals in states that have created protections for low-THC therapies to more easily access this potential treatment option.

Not everyone should or would use medical cannabis as a treatment option, and further research is needed on the connection between cannabis and the conditions we represent. But medical cannabis may be the best alternative for some individuals when other options have failed or come with significant side effects that impact health, quality of life, and ability to stay on a medication. We urge you to allow the CARERS Act a vote in your respective committees. Only the CARERS Act would provide the necessary safe and legal access and protection for patients while removing federal barriers to research that can improve the safety and efficacy of medical cannabis treatments.

If you have any questions, please contact Steph Sherer, executive director of Americans for Safe Access, at steph@safeaccessnow.org.

Sincerely,

Americans for Safe Access
Citizens United for Research in
Epilepsy (CURE)
Danny Did Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation

Finding a Cure for Epilepsy and
Seizures (FACES)
Hope4Harper
Hope for Hypothalamic Hamartomas
Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (LGS)
Foundation

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Women's Health Network
Realm of Caring
The Michael J. Fox Foundation
Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance