

August 25, 2017

Senator Ricardo Lara
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Lara:

On behalf of the epilepsy community, the undersigned organizations, write in support of Assembly Bill 845, which would ensure timely access to medications derived from cannabidiol (CBD) once approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and scheduled by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

Epilepsy is a medical condition that produces seizures affecting a variety of mental and physical functions. Our organizations represent the 3 million Americans living with epilepsy and seizure disorders. We have seen firsthand the devastation that uncontrolled seizures can bring, including developmental delays, medical complications, and even death. Access to new therapies is particularly important for the one third of people living with epilepsy who experience intractable or uncontrolled seizures and are living with rare epilepsies, and the many more who experience significant adverse effects from their current medication.

The FDA is currently reviewing at least one CBD-derived therapy that shows promise for the treatment of Dravet and Lennox Gastaut syndromes (LGS), tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC) and potentially other rare epilepsies. This potential treatment option has both Orphan Drug Designation and Fast Track Designation from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and could be approved as soon as early 2018. After FDA approval, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) would schedule the therapy through administrative action and the medication would become available for individuals living with epilepsy. Because CBD is a Schedule I substance under the California state drug schedule, state action is needed to ensure California residents will have access to FDA-approved therapies derived from CBD. This legislation would create access to FDA-approved prescription medications and we strongly urge your support AB 845.

We urge you to support AB 845 to ensure timely access to future FDA approved therapies derived from CBD. Please do not hesitate to contact Angela Ostrom, Chief Legal Officer & Vice President Public Policy, at 301-918-3766 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Epilepsy Foundation
LGS Foundation
Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance