

# Maine Chapter

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Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and esteemed members of the Veteran's and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Deborah Hagler, MD, MPH and I am a resident of Harpswell and the immediate past president of the Maine Chapter of the AAP.

I am writing to share information for you to consider as you debate **LD 94, "An Act Regarding the Use of Medical Cannabis by Minors"**.

Here are a few key points I hope you will consider as you discuss and make recommendations around cannabis use for youth.

1. 65% of high school students perceived little or no harm from using marijuana a few times a week. With increased availability in the US of medical and recreational marijuana. Perception of harm from marijuana use is slowly decreasing in youth.

2 Regular use of marijuana in adolescents during a time period when the brain is still developing increase risk of learning problems, depression, psychotic illness and suicide.

3. The Brain continues to develop until the mid to late 20s.

4. In 2021 47% of youth felt marijuana easily accessible and this data was collected during a pandemic when conditions for youth gathering altered but the landscape of the pandemic.

5. I am continually astonished by the ease and continue to be increasingly concerned by the number of 18 year old patients with mental illness who apply for a green card for medical marijuana with no clear indication. Insisting on increase education for clinicians providing cards to young adults will ensure appropriate consideration during a critical phase of development.

6. Ensuring strict criteria are utilized for the dispensation of green cards to young adults whose brains are developing will protect them from further harm but will allow compassionate consideration where the data suggests in some populations access to medical marijuana may be helpful as an adjunct therapy.

The Maine AAP realizes there are so many factors around cannabis legislation, and we hope that you identify a clear process for reviewing applicants and add a compassionate use category.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have so please don't hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of assistance.