

Leo Paquette
Firefly Organics
LD 929

Senator Hickman and Esteemed Members of the VLA Committee,

I am writing in strong support of LD 929, An Act to Increase Access to Medical Cannabis for Seniors and Veterans. This bill is a crucial step forward in ensuring that our veterans and seniors have the healthcare options they deserve, particularly when it comes to the use of medical cannabis.

Currently, veterans and seniors, especially those aged 65 or older, face unnecessary barriers when seeking medical cannabis as a treatment. Requiring a valid written certification, a process that often involves additional time, costs, and complications, prevents many eligible individuals from accessing the benefits of medical cannabis. For many veterans who suffer from PTSD, chronic pain, and other service-related conditions, as well as seniors dealing with a range of health issues such as arthritis, insomnia, and anxiety, medical cannabis offers a safer and more effective alternative to traditional pharmaceutical treatments.

By allowing veterans and individuals aged 65 and older to qualify for the Maine Medical Use of Cannabis Act without the requirement for a valid written certification, LD 929 would provide immediate relief and access to those who need it most. This bill would reduce unnecessary red tape, lower the cost of medical treatment, and, most importantly, enhance the quality of life for our aging population and those who have served our country.

In addition, medical cannabis has proven to be a valuable tool in addressing the opioid crisis. With many seniors and veterans struggling with the potential dangers of opioid use, cannabis can serve as a safer alternative, helping to alleviate pain and improve overall well-being without the high risk of addiction or overdose.

Passing LD 929 is a common-sense measure that aligns with Maine's commitment to improving healthcare access, especially for vulnerable populations. I urge the committee to support this bill, as it will help to ensure that our veterans and seniors can receive the care they need, when they need it, with fewer barriers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Leo Paquette
Firefly Organics