

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and the members of the veterans and legal affairs committee. My name is Lizzy Hayes, I am a medical cannabis caregiver and a medical cannabis patient and I am speaking today in support of LD1038 which would extend the term of patient written certifications to 2 years.

Many patients use cannabis to treat chronic and lifelong conditions, and recertification is a step we must take each year to continue to have the right to access, grow and to possess our medicine. Many patients, like myself, grow their own plants, process their own medicine and manage their own care through years of experimenting with various dosages and different strains to get the personalized medicine that best treats their symptoms. Most physicians have no formal training on the use of cannabis as medicine and patients will often get more in-depth recommendations and information from caregivers who are experienced in using cannabis and can advise on ways to consume it carefully or direct them to specific cultivars, and share experiences of other patients dealing with similar symptoms. I see many sincere and knowledgeable caregivers filling a role as community herbalists, and apothecaries where they can supply and advise on the use of this very medicinal plant.

There are other states which allow for longer periods of medical certifications such as Illinois, and Oklahoma which is a 2 year period, or Maryland which allows up to 3 years. And some states have language that allows for a longer period if specified or designated by the physician. This seems especially appropriate in the cases of lifelong incurable conditions such as seizure disorders, pain from permanent physical injury, autism spectrum disorder or other conditions that would require long term ongoing treatment.

I ask that this committee please vote ought to pass on a bill that is a very small step to reduce the number of times that a patient must renew their card, and I would ask that you engage in discussions about the appropriateness of extending beyond two years for veterans, seniors or patients with lifelong conditions. Thank you.

And I wanted to address a question asked by Senator Timberlake to Representative Boyer regarding the potency of medical cannabis vs that of adult use and the need for a medical review by a doctor due to the increased potency. Home growers in adult use can make products that are just as potent as the products available on the medical cannabis market.