

THE ARIZONA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

NO. 14-09
DATE: 5/29/09

Introduced by: Sue Sisley, M.D.

Subject: 2010 Arizona Medical Marijuana Initiative

Assigned to: Reference Committee on Reports and Resolutions

- 1 Whereas, Medical evidence is overwhelming that marijuana can relieve certain types of
2 pain, nausea, vomiting and other symptoms caused by such illnesses as multiple sclerosis,
3 cancer and AIDS or by the harsh drugs sometimes used to treat them with remarkable
4 safety, and
5
- 6 Whereas, Available anti-emetics often prove ineffective for patients, which can result in
7 malnourishment, weight loss, delayed chemotherapy treatments, decreased survival rates,
8 and
9
- 10 Whereas, There are no other medications that have the same mechanisms of action as
11 marijuana and thus cannot provide its therapeutic advantages, although Dronabinol
12 (Marinol) is available by prescription in capsules, but has the distinct disadvantage of
13 containing only synthetic delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) which is only one of many
14 therapeutically beneficial cannabinoids in the natural plant, and
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- 16 Whereas, Arizona's current law sends sick and dying patients to prison instead of allowing
17 them to use medical marijuana to ease their pain and suffering, even if their doctors
18 recommend it, and
19
- 20 Whereas, 65% of Arizona voters support removing criminal penalties for the medical use of
21 marijuana, according to a February 2009 poll, and voters have already passed medical
22 marijuana initiatives twice in the state, in 1996 and 1998, however, due to a technical error
23 in the wording of these laws, they have failed to effectively protect medical marijuana
24 patients from arrest, and
25
- 26 Whereas, The 2010 Arizona Medical Marijuana Initiative would: Allow terminally and
27 seriously ill patients who find relief from marijuana to use it with their doctors' approval;
28 Protect these seriously ill patients from arrest and prosecution for the simple act of taking
29 their doctor-recommended medicine; Permit qualifying patients or their caregivers to legally
30 purchase their medicine from tightly regulated clinics, as they would any other medicine -- so
31 they need not purchase it from the criminal market; Create registry identification cards, so
32 that law enforcement officials could easily tell who was a registered patient, and establish
33 penalties for false statements and fraudulent ID cards; Keep commonsense restrictions on
34 the medical use of marijuana, including prohibitions on public use of marijuana and driving
35 under the influence of marijuana; now, therefore, be it

1 **RESOLVED**, That in regards to the proposed 2010 Arizona Medical Marijuana ballot
2 initiative, the Arizona Medical Association:

- 3
- 4 • Supports the 2010 Arizona Medical Marijuana Initiative, which allows the
5 compassionate use of medical marijuana by seriously ill patients with a doctor's
6 recommendation.
- 7 • Believes that, for appropriate, seriously ill patients, the potential benefits derived from
8 medical marijuana usage, outweigh any suspected health risks or speculative risks of
9 abuse.
- 10 • Urges its own members, the medical community at large, public officials and the
11 community at large to support the 2010 Arizona Medical Marijuana Initiative.
- 12 • Recognizes the vital importance that seriously ill patients in Arizona have legal
13 access to each and every safe, effective and available medication to control
14 symptoms of pain and nausea, just as 13 other states have passed effective medical
15 marijuana laws, including neighboring California, Nevada and New Mexico.