

13/03/2015

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO BOX 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

RE: The Moderator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014

Dear Delegates

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding the 'Regulator of Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2014'.

I am providing this information as 'food for thought' with the view of encouraging the decision makers to ensure they give appropriate and careful consideration when making decisions on behalf of the people of Australia who need to access Medicinal Cannabis.

To give you a little bit of background on myself and my family's personal situation, I have provided a copy of a letter below that I sent to over 200 politicians on all sides of Australian politics in June last year expressing my concerns about the critical need for Medicinal Cannabis being made available to a wider range of people who are chronically sick, AND NOT just the terminally ill. I received a very positive response from many of the Greens Senators, with the main one being Dr Richard Di Natale who absolutely supported my plea and in fact advised that my communication was one of the many powerful stories which was circulated to his colleagues. Subsequently, Mr Shane Rattenbury also communicated with me seeking my permission to use my communication to support the Greens Bill to allow access to cannabis for medicinal purposes which is now being examined by an ACT Legislative Assembly Committee Inquiry. On the 11/03/2014 I was invited to appear before the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Services in relation to its Inquiry into the Drugs of Dependence (Cannabis Use for Medical Purposes) Amendment Bill 2014 Exposure Draft and related discussion paper. On the 13/03/2014 my wife and I appeared before the standing committee where we addressed the committee with our family's situation and plea.

I am also in the process of communicating directly with Paulene Hanson of the One Nation party seeking an opportunity to meet with her in person to discuss our situation.

Accordingly, I would sincerely appreciate your confirmation of this communication, and I look forward to a future where all humans are treated equal when trying to maintain quality of life - Thank you for your time.

Sincerely
Grant Beale

Copy of email dated 23/06/2014

Grant Beale



23/06/2014

Attention: Federal and State Greens Senators

RE: Looking for your support - Please !

Dear Senator

I am communicating to you on compassionate grounds to respectfully ask you for your support regarding the legalization of Medical Marijuana.

My mother who just turned 70 had been battling Meningitis (diagnosed as having been brought on my Sarcoidosis i.e., her own immune system fighting itself,) when she contracted Shingles in three nerves, including her RIGHT arm, hand and fingers, This soon developed into Post-Herpetic Neuralgia (PHN) and she has been suffering with this PHN for over three years now with pain so debilitating at times, that she had seriously considered having her right arm amputated. And of course, as she is right handed, there is an immeasurable number of things she is unable to do because of the pain, and which falls to her Carer - Her Husband of 50 years being my Father). And unfortunately, the slightest bit of stress, brings on increased pain and suffering.

After years of trying to manage her painful PHN condition by taking expensive heavy duty prescription drugs such as Oxycontin and Endone (both of which she is no doubt now addicted to), plus Lyrica, Prednisone, Methotrexate (Chemotherapy), Codeine just to name a few, (and which include medications to counteract side-effects caused by one or another medication), she has been advised by the medical experts that she has unfortunately reached the end of the Pharmaceutical road. This is so very sad indeed :(

As part of the ongoing attempt to manage her excruciating pain, she continues to use electrical therapy for nerve stimulation several times every day in the form of a TENS machine taped to her right hand and arm. At night, it has been a challenge for her trying to get an acceptable amount of sound sleep. Part of her bed-time routine has been to lay her arm wrapped inside a plastic bag filled with crushed ice to try and alleviate or relieve the terrible burning pain of nerve damage while she slept. However, her Hypertension Specialist recently advised that she stop the ice bathing due to it causing her blood pressure to sky rocket which in turn brought on chronic migraine headaches. This also increased the very serious risk of her having a major stroke, as she had already suffered at least three mini strokes. As you could imagine, my mother consequently became horribly depressed to the point where she required physiological counseling.

My father told me with tears in his eyes that there have been times when she would cry in his arms saying she doesn't want to be here any more due to the fire burning relentlessly inside her arm, hand and fingers. It's only been the love and support from her caring family that has kept her strong, and helped her to try and live with it the best she can.

In the outset, this debilitating condition has seriously affected her quality of life, including that of my father as her Carer, who incidentally, has recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

This combination of our parents' health issues has sadly caused much personal grief to the rest of the family due to our feeling so helpless, (two sons, a daughter, their respective spouses, together with their seven grand kids). And to rub insult into injury, I too have been battling a severe anxiety and depression disorder since 1994. I became very ill after taking a range of prescription anti-depressant drugs for so long that I required counseling after slowly weaning off them due to the abhorrent side-effects causing Atrial Fibrillation, Heart Palpitations, Blood in urine, Nausea, Gastrointestinal issues, Insomnia, etc. I am a husband and father of three and always try and remain strong in their eyes.

Further, my wife sustained a back injury in 2006 where she crushed the sciatica nerve at the L3,L4,L5, S1 vertebrae so badly that for nearly six months she was unable to shower herself, use the toilet on her own, she could not drive a car, and would sleep on the floor with a rolled up towel placed under her lower spine. She went through extensive counseling and was prescribed Quadruple dosages of Tramadol to try and manage the pain. As this had little to no effect, the doctor encouraged her to source and use Marijuana. However, due to our uneducated minds at the time, we did not consider this as an option.

So, I respectfully ask you, where do we go to from here? PLEASE, what would you and/or your family do if put in the same situation as ours?

We have undertaken an extensive amount of personal research for over 12 months into the damaging effects to the human body from long term Chemo based therapies and Opioids, and we've looked closely at various herbal based therapies as an alternative treatment. I have also read and watched hundreds of videos and stories about what others have done trying to manage the pain, and as you would guess, we always end up back to Medical Cannabis being the Holy Grail of treatments to manage such a condition. (Whilst I could send you links to literally thousands of web-sites and forums from around the world, it would be impracticable to do so at this time.)

Openly speaking, I have a number of personal friends who have used raw cannabis for many years to manage personal illnesses such as cancer, depression, and chronic pain which they all swear by 100%, as they no longer need all the expensive synthetic Pharmaceutical prescription drugs. Accordingly, Cannabis has been offered to me many many times (mostly in the form of a tincture) to help ease/manage my Mum's pain. However, as we are law abiding citizens with a good standing in the community, we have been way too afraid to try the Cannabis Extract mainly due to the risk of being caught and deemed criminals, just like the Haslam family are.

As you are well aware, Dan Haslam and his family have recently appeared in various Radio and TV National Broadcasts over the past couple of weeks, and when listening/watching we were totally blown away to learn Dan's own father is a retired Drug Squad detective of 30 years, and his mother a registered nurse. If anyone should know better, these are the people who have had first hand experience when it comes to drugs.

We also learned during the Alan Jones interview live on 2GB, that Dan himself makes his own marijuana oil using a rice cooker. Alan also said during the live broadcast that quote 'Dan, his Father and Mother Lucy are all criminals and should be arrested. The police should be knocking down the studio door to arrest them right now.'

How, and why should it be allowed to happen, that someone can become a criminal simply because

they want to live!! They are not pushing or selling a drug but are simply using a medicinal form of a plant or vegetable, to improve their own health or way of life?

Again, please help us understand;

1) Why is using Medical Cannabis an illegal criminal act to relieve chronic pain, when on the other hand it is legal to take and become addicted to Opioids to relieve chronic pain - just like my Mother is?

2) Why is using Medical Cannabis a criminal act, when someone needs to escape the suffering and the ravages of Chemotherapy - just like Dan Haslam?

3) Why is using Medical Cannabis a criminal act, when a child suffering hundreds of seizures a day causing irreversible brain damage, shows a dramatic improvement immediately after using Medical Cannabis - just like so many children are living proof of doing as documented in any number of online videos?

4) Why do we (or any other Australian for that matter) have to sell up everything and leave this beautiful Country we were born in to move to the likes of Colorado in the USA just so we can legally access Medical Marijuana? Have you been informed at the financial state of Colorado? The economy and Real Estate there is booming while crime is declining - all because of the legalisation of Marijuana!

We also watched on the Channel 7 Sunday Show Interview, and watched Dan's father holding home grown Marijuana, along with his son Dan making his own batch of Marijuana oil in his shed. This is desperation stuff! Why are they deemed criminals when they absolutely have to do this just to live a normal, healthy life - the same healthy life that the majority of people already enjoy?

And YES, you are right - they should NOT have to!!

But of course, this has raised a number of interesting points listed below... but before continuing, I wish to make it very clear that you please don't misunderstand me here as being insensitive. I have the utmost respect for the Haslam family who have the guts, determination, conviction and compassion to do what they are doing. I myself, my friends, and all the members in my family circle have signed Dan's online petition, and I have also written to to Lucy Haslam thanking her for what she has done and continues to do pushing the legalization of Medical Marijuana. She is sadly another desperate mother fighting for her son - just like Daniel Morcom's mum!

Here are our points identified when watching the Haslam's being interviewed.

1) Why has our Law enforcement agencies not arrested Dan along with his Mother and Father?

2) Has Dan Haslam and his family been granted a special exemption or secret privileges to continue illegally possessing Marijuana just because his father happens to be a retired Police Officer of 30 Years with the Drug Squad?

3) How can Tamworth's top cop 'Detective Superintendent Tim Pheeny' state on National TV that he not only supports the Haslam family, but is 'turning a blind eye' on their illegal activities? How can this Senior Public Servant be allowed to do this? Why has he not been sacked and formally charged with aiding and abetting drug users?

4) Because Dan Haslam and his family can get away with avoiding arrest, does this mean my 70 y.o. mother suffering from an unmanageable health condition which pharmaceutical medicine can't

manage her quality of life, gives us a special exemption too, should she start using Medical Cannabis and be caught out?

5) What is your stance on this, do you agree these people should all be arrested and formally charged as criminals for possessing and using marijuana (an illegal drug)?

They are NOT criminals and should NOT be classed as criminals!

Realistically, access to raw cannabis is so very easy. Just about everyone I know can get their hands on some. Bottom line is, it will never go away, and with all the new evidence coming to light (globally), there is no other option than to embrace it, support it, and legalise it. And we certainly don't want to be held to ransom by the money hungry pharmaceutical companies either, once they start selling it.

We just want to be able to access it ourselves (in a similar way anyone can when making their own home brewed alcoholic beverages with raw ingredients bought from the local corner store). And above all, the last thing we do not want, is to be deemed criminals just because we want to help ourselves to live a normal life when we start using this ancient natural herbal plant/vegetable in the very near future.

In closing, if and when you can find the time, I BEG you to please, please, please at the very least, watch the three videos below - I am absolutely certain they will give you some food for thought when reconsidering your stance on decriminalising the use of Medical Cannabis.

The Power of Raw Cannabis (Dr William Courtney, Dr Donald Abraham)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgEP9FdlzT8>

Charlotte's Web and Zaki's Journey (Dr Alan Shackelfood)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BH5yzEu3JGQ>

The Power of Raw Cannabis (Dr Hergenrather)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwd1I5C53jY>

Thank you for your time. I truly look forward to your response to the issues and questions I have raised above with great interest and concern.

Sincerely yours

Grant Beale

PS. I have also read and reread Mrs Jillian Skinner's written response to Mr Tim Own MP Member for Newcastle dated 19/05/14, and like the many others I have shared it with, we are profoundly stunned and disappointed by the apparent lack of knowledge and contradictions contained within it. To be honest, one could be forgiven for thinking there must have been some sort of ulterior motive when she simply blew off the 5 recommendations of the NSW Parliament Legislative General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4: The use of Cannabis for medical purposes ?