



FRIENDS of NIDA

April 23, 2018

The Honorable Phil Roe
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives
335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tim Walz
Ranking Member,
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives
333 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Roe and Ranking Member Walz:

The undersigned national organizations are writing to strongly endorse the "[VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2018](#)." We applaud your initiative, and that of your House co-sponsors, to facilitate objective research on both the potential therapeutic efficacy and risk for adverse effects of marijuana and its constituent compounds in the treatment of pain, PTSD and other health conditions common in the veteran population.

Understanding the characteristics of a broad range of marijuana products, including understanding the impact of variation in potency (i.e., amount of tetrahydrocannabinol in the plant), concentration of other components (e.g., cannabidiol) and route of administration, will be critical for evaluating the health effects of marijuana use. Rigorous research into the potential therapeutic benefits and public health consequences of marijuana use will lead to more refined cannabinoid medication development through identification of target chemical constituents associated with unique behavioral or physiological effects.

The National Institutes of Health recently convened a [Neuroscience Research Summit on Marijuana and Cannabinoids](#) to address the growing need to understand the basic pharmacology and potential therapeutic benefits of cannabinoids, as well as their [deleterious effects](#). Information from that Summit complemented the findings of a report published last year by the National Academy of Medicine entitled "[Health Effects of Marijuana: An Evidence Review and Research Agenda](#)." Your bill will serve one of the principal recommendations of that report by supporting clinical evaluation of the risk/benefit of cannabis through the research agenda of the VA.

Thank you again for introducing the "VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2018". Our organizations represent a range of scientific, professional, and patient provider and advocacy groups, which may differ on policies related to the legal status of marijuana, but are united in their support of scientific research. We are eager to assist in any way we can as this bill receives further consideration.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Neurology
American Brain Coalition
American College of Neuropsychopharmacology
American Psychological Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Clinical Psychopharmacology
Aspen Brain Institute
Bridge the Gap - SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation
College on Problems of Drug Dependence
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences

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