



NC Family ISSUE BRIEF

PLEASE OPPOSE THE LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA FOR “MEDICAL” OR ANY OTHER PURPOSE IN NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Family Policy Council has followed medical research on marijuana for many years, and based on that research, we urge you to oppose the legalization of marijuana for medical or any other purpose in North Carolina.

We appreciate the efforts in House Bill 563 to prohibit access to harmful substances like Kratom and Tianeptine. However, adding the legalization of marijuana as medicine to this bill is contrary to the positions stated for years by the Food and Drug Administration, American Academy of Neurology, American Psychiatric Association, and American Medical Association.

To Date:

- The [Food and Drug Administration has approved](#) one cannabis-derived drug product to treat seizures associated with epilepsy and three synthetic cannabis-related drug products to treat nausea and vomiting caused by cancer chemotherapy as well as loss of weight and appetite for AIDS patients.¹ **The FDA has not approved marijuana for medicinal use.**
- The [American Academy of Neurology](#) states that it currently **does “not support the use of, nor any assertion of therapeutic benefits of, cannabis products as medicines for neurologic disorders in the absence of sufficient scientific peer-reviewed research to determine their safety and specific efficacy.”** The Academy points out that, “The FDA-approved plant-based CBD product is an example that has now proven to be sufficiently safe and effective for the treatment of seizures for certain epilepsy patients.”²
- The [American Psychiatric Association in its Position Statement in Opposition to Cannabis as Medicine](#) encourages further research, and states: **“There is no current scientific evidence that cannabis is in any way beneficial for the treatment of any psychiatric disorder. In contrast, current evidence supports, at minimum, a strong association of cannabis use with the onset of psychiatric disorders. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to harm, given the effects of cannabis on neurological development.”**³
- Similarly, the U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs website article entitled [Cannabis Use and PTSD Among Veterans](#) says **“research to date does not support cannabis as an effective PTSD treatment, and some studies suggest cannabis can be harmful, particularly when used for long periods of time.** Given these concerns, the VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline for PTSD (2023) **recommended against the use of cannabis for the treatment of PTSD.”**⁴
- The [American Medical Association Policy Statement on “Cannabis Legalization for Medical Use”](#) says that the AMA **“believes that cannabis for medicinal use should not be legalized through the state legislative, ballot initiative, or referendum process...”**⁵ In a related [article on the AMA website](#) about a friend of the court brief filed by the AMA and the Mississippi State Medical Association, there is a section entitled “Initiative Hurts Public Health.” It quotes



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the current AMA policy opposing state legislative legalization and tells the court the basis for its opposition:

"While it is possible there may be beneficial medicinal uses of marijuana, numerous evidence-based studies demonstrate that significant deleterious effects abound,' the brief tells the court, going on to say that **'without question, the public health risks are immense:'**

- Drug abuse and addiction;
- Change in brain function;
- Lung disease;
- Intoxication and impaired driving;
- Developmental interference;
- Impaired cognition;
- Psychological illness;
- Cardiovascular abnormalities;
- Negative social functioning effects;
- Cancer.

The brief tells the court a **'massive amount of future systemic research and controlled-trials'** are needed to study the safety and efficacy of cannabis for medicinal purposes."⁶

FOR THESE REASONS, WE URGE YOU TO OPPOSE ANY LEGISLATION THAT WOULD LEGALIZE MARIJUANA FOR "MEDICAL" OR ANY OTHER PURPOSE IN NORTH CAROLINA!

¹ <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/public-health-focus/fda-and-cannabis-research-and-drug-approval-process>

² <https://www.aan.com/policy-and-guidelines/policy/position-statements/medical-cannabis/>

³ <https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/About-APA/Organization-Documents-Policies/Policies/Position-Cannabis-as-Medicine.pdf>

⁴ https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/marijuana_ptsd_vets.asp

⁵ <https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/cannabis?uri=%2FAMADoc%2Fdirectives.xml-D-95.969.xml>

⁶ <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/public-health/ama-urges-court-overturn-medical-cannabis-ballot-initiative>