

2020 MN Medical Cannabis Program Medical Condition Petition Comments

Written comments received through October 14, 2020
(Organized by medical condition)

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Anxiety	p. 1
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Anxiety

I am writing to voice my concern about making anxiety a qualifying medical condition for medical cannabis. As a Mayo trained addiction psychiatrist, I have grave concerns about adding this diagnosis.

First off, there are a multitude of conditions that cause anxiety symptoms- everything from substance intoxication, substance withdrawal, adjustment disorders, grief, reactive attachment disorder, personality disorders, depression, PTSD, ADHD, neurological conditions, anxiety due to medical conditions, low oxygen levels, cardiac disease, endocrine disorders, etc.

So, when someone gets their medical cannabis certificate for “anxiety” what in fact, is the persons’ actual diagnosis? Without a thorough evaluation by trained professional, one can only guess and go by subjective report. Diagnoses that could be treated by evidence based treatment could be missed. Meanwhile, there is risk for worsening mental health problems, addiction, and diversion of medical cannabis.

Every year I attend the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry Cannabis Interest group. We discuss how the “court of public opinion” (vs science) is driving widespread cannabis use. Despite some people’s subjective report that cannabis decreases their anxiety, there is no evidence that cannabis treats ANY psychiatric disorder. Every day, I treat patients coming into the psychiatric emergency at HCMC who complain of anxiety. Many of these patients continue to use illicit cannabis in large amounts ostensibly “to self-treat” their anxiety condition AND seek mediations from me to treat anxiety. I tell them that cannabis use is likely contributing to and exacerbating to their anxiety. Most are reluctant to give up cannabis since it is widely available they consider it harmless.

Alcohol used to be the acceptable social anxiolytic. I see plenty of patients with both alcohol use disorder and anxiety disorder. I have to treat both conditions. The alcohol use makes the anxiety worse and more difficult to treat. Now I have to deal with increasing numbers of cannabis-induced anxiety disorder.

It is misleading to the public to let them think they can show up to a dispensary with a certificate to “treat” mental disorders. In fact, this practice causes harm and increases mental illness in our vulnerable populations such as adolescents. The literature shows it does cause harm and makes anxiety worse. See excerpts below.

Thank you,

Kathleen Heaney MD, DFAPA

Addiction Psychiatrist - Hennepin County Medical Center

Supporting research:

Reduced Striatal Reward Activation in Anxious and Depressed Cannabis Users

Biological Psychiatry, 2020-05-01, Volume 87, Issue 9, Pages S437-S437, Copyright © 2020

“Cannabis use is associated with attenuated brain processing of reward magnitude in anxious and

depressed individuals and may contribute to persistent affective symptoms. There is evidence that individuals with mood and anxiety disorders use cannabis for “self-medication”, to attenuate aversive mood states or induce positive mood. However, there is little neurobiological evidence supporting such use”.

Update on the Neuropsychiatry of Substance Use Disorders

Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 2020-06-01, Volume 43, Issue 2, Pages 291-304

“The addictive potential of cannabis, including its ability to create physical dependence, is still unfamiliar to many people. As the legal barriers to using cannabis are relaxed on a state level, there has been substantial increase in heavy and addictive, as opposed to casual or infrequent, use. 13 For those exposed to it for the first time, the likelihood of becoming addicted is 8% to 10%, 14 exactly the same as for benzodiazepine (9%) and significantly less than for alcohol (15%). However, when used daily, the addictive potential seems to be higher, perhaps because of the long half-life of cannabinoids. However, since these studies were done, the nature of the available cannabis preparations has changed. Agricultural advances now can produce a plant with a THC content as high as 20%, as opposed to the 3% concentration available in the 1960s. Furthermore, newer, denser formulations such as so-called dabs and distillates can yield THC concentrations up to 80%. In addition, electronic vaping devices, first developed for tobacco, are now being used for cannabis inhalation and may be leading to a more efficient delivery of the drug into the body”.

Psychiatric Symptoms Caused by Cannabis Constituents: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis
Lancet Psychiatry, 2020-04-01, Volume 7, Issue 4, Pages 344-353, Copyright © 2020

“That acute administration of THC induces significant increases in positive, negative, general, and total symptoms with large effect sizes in adults with no history of psychotic or other major psychiatric disorders”.

[American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry Medical Use of Marijuana Policy](#)

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry

<https://www.aaap.org/>

Slides from- Cannabis Policy and Outcomes for the Addiction Psychiatrist: Making Progress Towards Model State Laws to Reduce Harm, December 6th, 2019 Evidence for the Use of “and Cannabis Use Disorder presented by Frances R. Levin, MD, Kennedy-Leavy Professor of Psychiatry at CUIMC Chief, Division on Substance Use Disorders, Department of Psychiatry, New York State Psychiatric Institute

- The 2013 American Psychiatric Association “Position Statement on Marijuana as Medicine” notes that “there is no current scientific evidence that marijuana 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 Neurodevelopment.” (Zaman et al. 2013)
- There are no randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of adequate power that have examined the efficacy of marijuana for Tourette’s disorder, PTSD, or Alzheimer’s disease. Psychiatric Disorders are Overrepresented among Adults with Cannabis Use Disorders
- Prevalence of ADHD is particularly high among Adolescents with Cannabis Use Disorders
- There are numerous relationships that may explain this overrepresentation.
- Cannabis use increases risk of psychosis in vulnerable populations that is dose and frequency dependent

- Cannabis use may increase risk of developing hypomanic sx's and PTSD
- Cannabis use worsens course of bipolar and psychotic disorders
- Cannabis use worsens severity of depression and anxiety disorder symptoms.
- To date, there is not adequate support use of cannabinoids for various psychiatric disorders

Anything for anxiety would be very helpful
JK

i have severe anxiety and panic attacks...i have been on several medications, but the only one that truly alleviates my condition, is cannabis. i calm down and meditate, also deep breathing practices. anxiety should be added to medical cannabis.

p.s. - street cannabis is much cheaper than dispensary cannabis.
AS

I have anxiety. I have prescribed tons of medication over the years and most of them make me feel "weird" or make me go into depression so I do not stay on them for long. I do not drink alcohol because it increases those traits about myself and I cannot drink on that medication.

I would like to have the option of medical cannabis because I feel like it is more natural and safe than Xanax. I think the amount of medication being handed out for anxiety warrants it to be on this list.

I have a son who is Autistic - and I have considered this option for him when he is older. Something to help him calm without making him a zombie. I am pro making cannabis legal in Minnesota for many reasons including the tax money, but these three that are up to be added definitely should.

TC

I would benefit using cannabis for anxiety, Nausea, muscle cramps, restless leg syndrome, fibromyalgia, headaches, and much more.

Thank you
SG

I suffer from severe general anxiety disorder. Basically means I'm anxious all the time. Marijuana helps immensely as it calms my nerves and leaves me at ease.

I do not like having to buy marijuana illegally. Often times the wrong strain of cannabis can give me more anxiety. I know what works and does not and I've had the ability to choose anxiety relief type strains in other states where it is legal. Buying illegally does not offer that option and it's risky.

Please add anxiety to the list for medical cannabis. It will help thousands of people like me. It's especially needed during these tough times, anxiety levels are very high.

JA

I just happen to be on the Medical Cannabis program for PTSD but what's more debilitating for me and is part of PTSD is the anxiety. Its anxiety that got me thinking about getting on the Cannabis program after a year being off of all pharmaceuticals... such as lexapro which 100% altered my brain. Its been 3 years since i stopped using it and I am just now figuring out what normal is. Anxiety definitely needs to be included. Its debilitating and its likely what causes many many people to attempt suicide. Many people have problems with anxiety.

I do not know anyone with either of the other two conditions. But I do have a friend in Arizona who is on their medical program (we need MN to be like that program). She has essential tremors. I have witnessed her shaking, saw her using cannabis and saw the tremors disappear. I have a daughter who also has essential

tremors and i would bet using cannabis would help her too. So I know essential tremors and tourette's are a long ways away from each other but if it helps essential tremors, seizures, parkinsons and other diseases then I would bet it would help this tic disorder.

LR

To start this letter off, I want to say I'm qualified under MN state law to use medical cannabis due to bi-lateral spinal cord nerve damage as well as other medical conditions. These, however are not the topic I write to you today about. I also suffer from anxiety due to previous abuse at the hands of family. Although I have recovered from my trama enough to not be classified as PTSD, I still have problems looking many men head on, putting myself in situations that will benefit me, or just simply making a phone call where I know a male voice may sound similar to a past abusers.

Let's fast forward to today. I use cannabis. Using said flower in its legal form (and sorry MN, it's not yet legal form too because of preference and I just enjoy the taste/smell). I learned that if used PROPERLY, my anxiety vanishes or dwells to a near zero. This is a hard feat, as I am on other medications that is supposed to do this for me, but does not work or do not work as well. I am also allergic to standard MAOI's and SSRI's (insurance's first line of drugs for anxiety and full of worse side effects then medical cannabis). The drugs I'm not allergic to, I have either a high tolerance to, do nothing, or do very little.

In summary to this short letter, medical cannabis has helped me. Starting off for nerve pain, I found quickly that it doubled it anxiety. I feel it should be approved for others as well. I know my anxiety is not as bad as others. My wife, for example, has anxiety to the point she will not leave the house some days. If, with the rules in place or by changing/adding rules, we can give those with severe/mild anxiety a safer feeling in society then I feel medical cannabis should be allowed to used for anxiety as well.

EB

I am a long-time sufferer of anxiety and I believe I deserve the chance to see if my disorder can be controlled by a natural product instead of a pharmaceutical. In order for that approach to be successful, however, sufferers need to be able to access known types and dosing of particular cannabis strains, and, like with all treatments, assess with their doctor what is working, what isn't, and make changes. All of this is essentially impossible without legalization.

Marijuana is not the enemy of the people. It's nature's medicine and can be life-changing for some people suffering from anxiety and many other disorders.

Please try to set aside the myths and propaganda regarding marijuana that have been pushed by our government, pharmaceutical companies, and law enforcement for 100 years, and vote to expand this natural and safe treatment to anxiety disorders.

JB

Hello I suffer from anxiety I been prescribed zoloft. I dont like the side effects the meds has given me. Although cannabis is not legal it would be very beneficial for it to be. Cannabis has been the only thing that helped me with my anxiety with no issues after the fact. I hope we raise awareness on how helpful this wonderful plant really is.

JM

Marijuana helps greatly with alleviating anxiety. I have struggled with anxiety my entire life, and found marijuana to be helpful. Please add anxiety to the list of qualifying conditions.

LW

I fully support the expansion of this natural amazing medicine. I suffer from anxiety and this would be life changing for me. Thanks for your time
AN

Yes I have PTSD and anxiety attacks I would love to be medicated with cannabis please.
LCM

Anxiety should be a qualifying condition I have that as well cannabis helps so much
Anonymous

My opinion is as a sufferer of very High anxiety. I do take medication that is effective for anxiety but the side effects are horrible. My system is really sensitive and I am allergic to eight different types of medication ranging in from antibiotics to anti-anxiety medication depression medication excetera. One of the side effects is severe migraines after three consecutive days of taking my medicine as prescribed I get a migraine and I'm down for days. I do not wish to add another medication to take care of the side effect. I would really like a more natural alternative. Thanks
A

As someone who suffers from anxiety, And is Legally medicated, and attends therapy to manage anxiety— I am someone with a great deal of privilege. I have insurance coverage. I have a job that allows me to run to doctor and therapy appointments, and I have the resources to pay for these services. Medical Cannabis for anxiety disorders would not only help people seek new treatments with less intense side effects from common psychiatric medicines— but actually would help provide many different socio-economic groups access to affordable care and treatment. POC and those living below the poverty line are the most vulnerable to anxiety and related mental health issues, and this would provide new pathways for these populations to cope and manage their health. Please consider adding anxiety (and related conditions like Depression) to options for medical marijuana here in Minnesota. This could be a major unlock for so many people unable to seek regular, consistent medical care.
MW

I'm writing to express my opinion on medical cannabis treatment in Minnesota. As a Mental Health Practitioner, and a self-medicating cannabis user, I know and understand the true benefits of this treatment. I have sensory issues related to a severe concussion in my youth. While Cannabis does not cure my condition, it does make it more tolerable. The constant ringing in my ears is akin to a pesky mosquito entering your ear canal that you cannot release. Unless you've lived with this condition, there is no way you can understand the effect on your disposition. Because of this condition, I am constantly feeling anxious, to the point where it affects my bowels, triggering a cycle of anxiety that can last for days. Smiling through it all is much easier with a regular dose of THC. I've been medicating myself illegally (while also confiding in my doctor for advice) for over a decade now. While nothing works to 'normalize' this condition completely, Cannabis does provide a degree of relief I cannot find elsewhere. As a professional, I am constantly aware my self-medicating puts me at risk for arrest, prosecution and I could potentially lose my job. Let's make all citizens who are either currently treating themselves, or could benefit from such treatment legal and legitimate. The risks are few, I've had worse side-effects from most prescription meds I've tried. I can live with the few, natural side-effects of cannabis. I cannot live with the man-made side-effects of arrest and/or incarceration and unemployment.

It's time.

DU

I have anxiety and depression. I have my neck and back fused from being hit by a drunk driver 7 years ago. I currently and surviving 4 surgeries since October and have a wound vac attached to my abdomen since January. NO DOCTOR IN MINNESOTA WILL PRESCRIBE ME CANNABIS!!!!!!!

NH

Marijuana greatly reduces my anxiety. It improves my emotional and physical state, especially if I am experiencing a panic attack. Please fix this. Please allow marijuana to be FULLY legal in Minnesota. Please do what you can to FIX the federal laws that classify marijuana incorrectly as a schedule 1 narcotic. Thank you!

AW

I would like to comment that I believe medical cannabis would be a huge help for my anxiety. I suffer from extreme anxiety and would like to be able to legally treat my anxiety with medical cannabis. Cannabis puts my mind at ease, relaxes me and the severity of my anxiety is lessened. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on medical cannabis and how it can help anxiety and how anxiety should be a condition that medical cannabis can be used as a treatment.

MJ

I just wanted to comment on how marijuana helps with my anxiety and social skills.

LP

I wanted to weigh in on the importance of allowing Medical Cannabis to be available for those including myself, who suffer from chronic bouts of anxiety along with depression. I am currently on a anti depressant medication- however- I feel that my anxiety is still a huge struggle for me. Please consider how important this approval would be in assisting with controlling anxiety.

LV

Please qualify medical cannabis for the treatment of anxiety for the affected citizens in the state of Minnesota

CS

I've used cannabis in the past for three things,....Anxiety,insomnia,and Pain,.....I was able to avoid prescribed chemicals from a Dr with all the side effects.I feel the cannabis helped with all three conditions, it just became a problem procuring the cannabis and the cost was more than I could afford.Now I'm seeing a Dr for anxiety and insomnia and just live with the pain as I await surgery to address the chronic pain condition.I'd like to add I don't think it's worth arresting and putting in jail people who use cannabis for they're likely trying to self medicate a legitimate medical condition.

JF

I SAY OK THE APPROVAL FOR MEDICAL CANNABIS FOR ANXIETY AND ECT. A WIN WIN BREAKTHROUGH.
LOVE AN INEVITABLE TREATMENTS DISCOVERING.

SF

I would just like to express my support for adding anxiety to the list of qualifying conditions. Anxiety can be completely debilitating and affects people both mentally and physically. People are forced to take medications that have sometimes rather nasty side effects. The medication can cause a tolerance build up over time requiring higher doses. Some have been proven to contribute to other illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease (with the long term use of Xanax). These medications can be difficult to obtain as well, as many doctors are afraid to prescribe them and treat patients as if they are just medication seeking. Refills can only be obtained once every month and people are chronically underdosed and must ration their medication. Living with anxiety is extremely frustrating. Both myself and my husband have it, and the uncertainties of 2020 have only exasperated it.

Additionally I would like to ask why no autoimmune diseases have been added to the list. Cannabis is an anti-inflammatory and would greatly help those of us who live with debilitating pain daily. We have to take medication regularly to keep our bodies from attacking itself, and these medications usually have tremendously awful side effects, similar to what cancer patients go through. Nausea, diarrhea, headaches, dizziness and more. Added to the wide variety of symptoms that we have from our Lupus/Rheumatoid/etc. I personally have Mixed Connective Tissue Disease which is an overlapping disease comprised of Systemic Lupus, Scleroderma, and Raynauds. I take medication daily for it and was recently on an 8 month period of daily prednisone along with hydroxychloroquine to get it under control; I still have joint pain that your usual nsaid and medications like Tylenol do not help. It is painful getting out of bed, getting up from the couch, walking, etc. I implore you to please look into sharing the benefits of MMJ with those of us forgotten, of which we number greatly. I have waited patiently, only to see things like "sleep apnea" be approved, meanwhile those of us in constant pain get no consideration. Thank you for reading, and I hope that someday Minnesota considers adding Autoimmune Diseases to the list of approved conditions.

KS

I'm a current patient in the Minnesota medical cannabis program. I am qualified under pain and spasms, but one of my main goals with this program was anxiety management. Within the first few months of being a patient, I was able to ween off BOTH of my SSRIs that were causing me severe side effects. CBD has helped me manage my anxiety day to day and the 1:1 quick acting products help me when I'm in the middle of a panic attack. THC dominant products help me wind down at the end of the day and allow me to fall asleep earlier. (I also deal with insomnia as a result of my anxiety) I truly would not be here without cannabis. I believe it is the most effective medication for anxiety treatment. With very little side effects. I believe this should be available for ALL Minnesotans suffering from anxiety! I am able to function day to day because of CBD and THC.

AL

I would be hesitant, but willing to try this medical for my high anxiety levels. I am a 49 year old, white female that has been on various meds since the age of 25. Either they haven't been real effective or the ones that did work very well would eventually wear off by my body getting used to and tolerant of the drug. I would then need to start over trying to find a new medication. I have heard so many success stories from others that have started on medical cannabis that have anxiety and have often wondered if it would help me. My understanding is that there would not be all the harmful chemicals and possible harsh side effects from cannabis compared to manufactured medications. . I often worry about developing tics due to long term use of my current medications.

LW

I know from experience that it has helped with my anxiety. This would be a very good move.

SS

We need this for anxiety. It's sad we don't have it for recreation reasons, then whatever condition we have, we could get it. Thanks

CL

I'm taking the time today to advocate for all the patients in MN that want to choose this medication over pharmacy drugs for conditions like Anxiety. I believe in the individual right to make any medical decision they want to and it should be between the doctor and patient. The state of Minnesota should interfere with that and especially over cannabis. I support full legalization of cannabis by using the existing framework that exists for tobacco including taxes. Thank you

BT

I'm a 58 year old woman. Five years ago I had a medically necessary hysterectomy. Shortly after, I started to wake up in the middle of the night or first thing in the morning, with a feeling like I was going to be sick. Soon, I was experiencing a tight chest and loss of appetite. In short order it blossomed into full blown panic attacks, crying, hyperventilating, feeling like I was going to have a heart attack. I saw my doctor and began using benzodiazepines and seeing a therapist. I am much improved, but still occasionally have anxiety that I cannot damp down without the use of medication. Benzodiazepines are highly addictive and can even result in overdose. I don't like needing to use this medication. I do not drink, do drugs or even smoke cigarettes, but if medically prescribed cannabis was available for anxiety, I feel it would be safer for me than benzodiazepines.

MB

Studies show that the endocannabinoid system plays an important role in [regulating anxiety, fear, and stress responses](#) by regulating our behavioral response to stressful stimuli. Notably, cannabinoid receptors are abundant in areas of the brain involved in anxiety processing such as the hippocampus, prefrontal cortex, and areas of the amygdala. These [studies](#) also explain how THC can have [opposing effects on anxiety](#) as dosage affects neuron activity differently via cannabinoid type 1 receptors

KS

In support of my position, see the attached [research publication](#). A quote from the paper's Abstract:

There is scarce evidence to suggest that cannabinoids improve depressive disorders and symptoms, anxiety disorders, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, Tourette syndrome, post-traumatic stress disorder, or psychosis.

Thank you for your attention to my comment.

KW

I think anxiety should be another reason to qualify for medical cannabis. So many people have anxiety and depression and I can say that it has helped me with my intolerable pain. The pain from stomach was 24/7 from gastroparesis and brought on anxiety and depression from my disease. I could barely eat or drink. I could not leave my house. Let alone my bed. Please add anxiety to the list.

KS

I cant speak for most people in my experiences with anxiety. I feel having medical cannabis is a better option instead of drinking alcohol or smoking cigarettes to help with anxiety.

NL

Please add anxiety, insomnia and depression to the list. I have intractable pain, anxiety, depression, and insomnia. All four conditions are greatly improved with cannabis use. I would also recommend adding OCD. Adding CBD to my THC regimen made me quit biting my nails after a 25 year habit. From what I read, nail biting is being reclassified as a form of OCD. Thank you.

NM

I grew up a star pupil in the DARE program. I abstained from drinking until I was 22. I never smoked a day in my life. And then, in my 30s, I reluctantly considered cannabis for the first time. Here's why. I grew up far from MN and in the years I have lived here I have fallen in love and had a family. I work full time as an engineer and teach university in the evening. I was also diagnosed with depression, anxiety and disordered eating. I spent years before my formal diagnosis telling myself I could manage on my own, telling myself I was just making things up or overblowing my feelings. But I can't manage it with my own brain chemistry and I asked my doctor to help me find the right cocktail of medicines to keep my mood stable and keep me healthy. It's an ongoing, imperfect exploration. Daily nausea, increased agitation, indigestion, decreased libido and sexual function and increased mood swings have been a few of the side effects of the drugs I've tried. It makes the journey hard and awful. Sometimes I feel completely hopeless.

I have 3 different meds to take in the event of panic attacks. They all take upwards of 30 minutes to take effect. It takes me hours to regain my focus and ability to get back to work and parenting. At the start of the pandemic, even before the Stay at Home orders I was blowing through my daily limits for as-needed meds on a regular basis. We, all of us, live between waves of panic now.

My husband asked if I would be interested in trying microdosing with cannabis. I was kind of appalled. I'd never taken cannabis. The idea of trying to manage my anxiety with something that is hard to get, unknown in its strength and could land me in jail made me feel more anxiety. It felt like a dumb idea. But then, we visited a state where recreational use is legal.

I took comfort in not breaking the law to try this thing that might help. Visiting my first dispensary showed me a very different side of cannabis. It's medicine. In many forms. With varying effects. Like a lot of the medicines I already rely on. So I tried it.

I was cautious with my first experience. I asked so many questions and could see I was at the bottom of a mountain of learning ahead of me. That first time, the effect was so quick, I could feel the stress that has become my daily existence lighten. Physically my heart rate leveled, my muscles relaxed and for the first time in my life, there was quiet in my brain. I didn't know that was possible for me. There are always thoughts, charging trains of rushing thoughts, worry, ideas, images in a constant onslaught. And then, for an hour or so, there weren't. I didn't feel impaired or "high". I did feel like I was back inside my own skin again. I was completely sold. We don't live in a state with legal recreational use. I researched my options in Minnesota and started asking my doctors about a diagnosis of PTSD for childhood traumas I continue to work through in therapy. I don't want a PTSD diagnosis in my medical records but it seemed like a possible avenue for effective relief from my daily load of anxiety, stress and depression. Having PTSD as part of my medical records could limit my access to care and opportunities in the future. So I feel stuck.

I am grateful that the Board is taking comments from the public. I am hopeful that here, in progressive Minnesota, we can make cannabis accessible for a wider audience. That we can reduce the stigmas of cannabis-as-medicine and normalize mental health therapies. Illegal consumption hurts us in a lot of ways: it puts people in the closet when they ought to seek supported treatment, it puts people in risky situations to procure

medicines, it eliminates the State's ability regulate quality, it eliminates the State's ability to make a profitable, safe industry that would create jobs and support mental and physical well-being.

Thank you for taking our comments. May we all find compassion.

SS

I am a current patient in the medicinal cannabis program. My qualifying condition is PTSD. The main symptom of PTSD for me and many others is anxiety, especially anxiety with panic attacks. I have noticed tremendous results since starting and continuing medicinal cannabis. It has been a great help with my anxiety, my panic attacks related to my PTSD and my overall anxiety in general.

I really think you should pursue the route to help treat anxiety with medicinal cannabis. It has helped me curb my daily anti anxiety medication as well as my benzos. I truly believe others should be allowed the same chance. Thank you for your time.

ZJ

For over 15 years I have struggled with Bipolar depression, GAD and insomnia. Every day I take 2 Depakote to deal with manic episodes, 3 hydroxyzine for anxiety, 2 busparone for anxiety and 2 trazodone to sleep. This is increasingly difficult as side effects get worse as time goes on.

With medical marijuana to be available for people with GAD and insomnia it would eliminate 7 medications a day. That's 2555 a year! Using something natural instead of chemicals could change just how I feel on a day to day basis.

I ask of you to frankly get with the times and be progressive in giving people freedom to choose different methods to treat the above listed diagnoses rather than chemicals found in medications.

Please do your job and help!!

CK

Thanks for reading my public comments on this subject.

I'm a diagnosed emetophobic who presents with acute anxiety symptoms around food, certain diseases, and many social situations. I've spent a lot of time with a therapist working via CBT and have seen some substantial improvements in my day to day life. I made the choice not to pursue daily medication for my anxiety and while this means a more difficult journey to normalcy for me, I did not want to add the side effects from an SSRI or benzodiazepine dependence to my life.

Marijuana has offered me relief from my anxiety and encouraged an appetite when the thought of eating made me nauseous and panicked. I've been able to use it as a tool in my arsenal in the constant struggle with anxiety without requiring daily use to have a positive impact on my quality of life. The fact a medication which provides substantial relief without significant side effects exists but is so strictly regulated in this state is a disservice to those Minnesotans in need. Please open up anxiety as a qualifying treatment option to help provide another avenue for relief and normalcy to me and similar people who are suffering.

Thank you,

AC

I am writing this letter because I am for medical cannabis for people with a diagnosis and history of depression and anxiety without a history of drug abuse or alcoholism issues. Myself personally, I have no addiction or history of drug or alcohol abuse or usage. I do not consider medical cannabis as a gateway drug since I don't smoke let alone do any kinds of drugs.

I do and have struggled with anxiety related to PTSD, in my family history and environmental stressors. I also suffer from back and body pain due to multiple car accidents. Every so often when a life stressors, and events out of my control, my anxiety and depression will kick in.

I am interested in natural methods and not medications to reduce these symptoms. I believe medical cannabis would be a great option for me to try. I hope you all consider medical cannabis for people with no history of drugs or alcohol abuse issues that have anxiety and depression. Thank you.

RN

I am requesting that social anxiety and depression be added to the qualifying medical conditions for medical marijuana. No pharmaceutical medicine has worked to alleviate these problems for me. I have used marijuana illegally and I have had positive results. However, I have social services involved with my kids and I am no longer able to self medicate without a valid prescription to medical marijuana. Please add these conditions in this years legislation. 2021. Thanks.

LD

I also suffer from anxiety along with PTSD and I think having the medical program for anxiety would be really great for people that have this medical problem. It will provide patients with much relief and help them on a day to day basis. What would also help would be to make this program more affordable so we can get more medicine.

AF

I have been on the program for 1 1/2 years for PTSD and truly believe it would help with anxiety disorder. It has made my life manageable and so much better. I was able to stop taking Xanax and am now to get off Klonopin. When I was at my worse, I couldn't make myself leave the house, I would vomit often from anxiety, and almost completely shut down into my own living hell.

Being on medical cannabis I have become more of the person I once was, easier to get along with people, more out going and adventurous, and it helps me process stress without all the debilitating anxiety. This medicine really has helped me make life better.

DH

I am enrolled in the medical cannabis program for IBD but I have also noticed a massive decrease in my anxiety after starting use of the medicine for my IBD. Please add it to the list of qualifying conditions. It helps very much and others could benefit from this rather than using dangerous and addictive pharmaceuticals.

QA

My name is (...) and I've been on Medical Marijuana for over a year now and it has changed my life for the better, night and day. I don't have the other two conditions being proposed but I do have anxiety on top of my autism and the Marijuana instantly brings my anxiety down by a substantial bit. Example: I like to have things planned out so I know what to expect out of my day and my mom will ask me to go places that arnt on the schedule and as silly as that is it just makes me anxious cause now I have to rearrange things. But with my Marijuana almost instantly working, I can just think and calm down and now actually go places with my mom! So in conclusion, from my experience it's helped me 10 fold and I know people that would like to get a prescription for Anxiety specifically but they don't qualify so I hope my testimonial helps in your decision.

CW

I suffer chronic irritable bowel syndrome and have many digestive issues which can escalate anxiety. Medical cannabis has helped me for over 20 years dealing with colon spasms and nausea that coincide with my chronic IBS. When my symptoms flare up my anxiety spikes as well. Cannabis has done miracles in calming the spasms and anxiety associated with my 20+ years of battling this invisible digestive disorder.

I don't know where I would be without medical cannabis to be honest. It's been a life changer for me. Please take this into consideration when you decide to fate of anxiety as a qualifying condition.

JL

My name is (...) and I have been a patient of the MN medical cannabis since 2017 (I believe) when PTSD was approved. Along with PTSD, I have a diagnosis of anxiety, Mast Cell Activation Syndrome with Chronic Neutropenia, and Ehlers Danlos Syndrome Hyper mobility type. Prior to being approved into the Medical Cannabis program I was facing a terminal diagnosis and health that reflected it. I was a mom to a young baby, and was on 10 plus different medications to manage horrible symptoms.

When PTSD was approved, I started working with a pharmacist at the St. Cloud location. He took the time to not only talk with me about how Medical Cannabis was sure to help my PTSD, but also helped me to research my other two conditions and worked hard with me to find a combination that treated all of my symptoms. All. Today, I am only using medical cannabis and am healthier than I have ever been. It allows me to be a mother, a wife, and a functioning person.

My anxiety has been one of the diagnoses most impacted by my Medical Cannabis. To be able to use a medication acutely at onset of anxiety without long term effects is unheard of with anxiety treatment. I have tried medications from every class, the most successful being Benadryl for treating my anxiety acutely. However, as to be expected, a long period of lathargy or sleep comes after this. Side effects with traditional pharmaceuticals left me unable to parent my child.

Please consider helping others hurting to reclaim their lives. There really can't be a reason to not approve.

Thank you for helping me to save my own life, and flourish. Please consider reaching as many people as possible with that same help.

MS

My name is (...). I'm currently prescribed medical cannabis through Life Medical for PTSD. However, I also suffer from extreme anxiety via Bipolar disorder (type 1). Medical cannabis is great for my PTSD but it also helps with my panic attacks and anxiety through out the day.

Medical cannabis is a wonder drug. I personally believe there should be no limitations on ANYONE who chooses to medicate with cannabis. Unfortunately, that's not how the world works (for now).

Allowing people to be prescribed cannabis for anxiety AND depression should be next on the list. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at anytime.

MC

I am writing in support to add anxiety and insomnia to the list of qualifying conditions for medical cannabis. As a current patient, I see beneficial side effects regarding these two areas.

Allowing flower sales would be extremely beneficial as well, to allow a truly unprocessed medicine at greatly reduced cost. Thanks for your continued support in expanding the availability and program.

RR

I am currently a MN medical cannabis patient and I qualify for PTSD. But during my almost 2 years on the program I have found that my ANXIETY and has improved from taking cannabis. I strongly suggest adding anxiety to the qualifying conditions. This WILL benefit many people! Thank you for taking the time to listen.

LE

My name is (...). I'm 40 years old. I've been happily married for 20 years and we have two wonderful kids ages 11 and 6. In 2016 I was diagnosed with a autoimmune disease called Sjogrens. One of the side effects is muscle spasms. The pain was horrible. I couldn't seem to find anything that would relieve it.

My husband mentioned looking into medical marijuana which I was completely against at first. I barely used marijuana, even as a teen. I think I tried it twice and both times I choked out puffs of smoke and was convinced I'd go to jail. So this wasn't an idea I considered fun. The reason my husband brought it up was that the pain had gotten so bad I wasn't sleeping. I was in bed 75% of a day.

I have general anxiety and have been in two out patient treatment programs. Sleep hygiene (this is real I swear) is a massive deal for those of us with anxiety. I also have OCD, PTSD and Major Depressive Disorder. The lack of sleep and constant pain was pushing me to a very desperate state.

After jumping through the hoops and getting set up that pain (thankfully) started to subside and I was able to sleep again. That helped so much I can't explain it. I still felt shame for using marijuana. Especially being from the DARE generation. I was raised drugs are bad and bad people do them. I had to work hard to get my mind around that. What I didn't expect was how much my anxiety seemed to be helped with this. The PTSD also but for today's purpose I'm focusing on anxiety.

Before I started my medical marijuana protocol for the pain there was a point where I was suicidal. Not in a cutesy way you see in movies. I was making a plan. My racing mind wouldn't stop and everything was terrifying. I couldn't sleep (as mentioned before) and bad thoughts would enter my head. I wasn't a good enough Mom or wife. I worried endlessly about so many things I can't list them. Some global issues, some local, some family etc. No subject was exempt. What's scarier was I was good at hiding it. Really good. The reality is that in my mind I was already dead. It was just a matter of when I chose to move forward with the plan.

The PTSD and anxiety felt like being inside a subway tunnel zipping past 126,468 thoughts a second and you're trying desperately to slow down but you can't even grasp one thought before another and another are thrown at you. Nobody can live like that forever.

Thankfully, I ended up getting some sleep and perspective once I started the medical marijuana. Once I caught up on my sleep the racing thoughts seem to be slowed or even stop at bedtime. I could get a perspective on what real problems were vs things that my brain was lying to me about. The record that would play the same fears over and over again eventually didn't play as much. It's never going to be gone but with the help of a wonderful treatment program, my therapist and medical marijuana I can identify where those thoughts are coming from. What triggered them and how to handle them.

I've lost friends to suicide. None of them did it for attention or even because the "wanted" to die. That's a misconception. They wanted the pain to stop. Whether it was physical pain or emotional. It always seems crazy to people who haven't been in that situation but I promise you, it's very real to them.

I've seen some friends drink away their pain and end up with a failing liver. That's allowed and legal. I don't understand that. I remember asking one of my friends who wound up near death why she was drinking so much. "It's legal and I don't know what else to do".

The "gateway drug" fear is alive and well but if argue that sugar, caffeine and alcohol are all drugs that actually give us our first high. I'll stop there because these aren't new arguments.

Lives could literally be saved by giving this a try under the watch of a medical professional. It sounds so simple but it's true.

My husband would have been widowed the fall of 2017. My 2 kids would not have a mother. My parents would have buried their only child. All of them would have wondered why and what they did wrong. They wouldn't have done anything. It's just that too many people would have not wanted to try new approaches and in turn no help would have been offered.

I lucked out. I had the pain so I was allowed a CBD/THC blend that helped me. It was an accidental blessing. Since then two of my former classmates have died from suicide. I often wonder if their families would have been spared that pain if there would have been more avenues of treatment options without shame. I wonder if even the most conservative family would have accepted their child trying medical marijuana if it would have kept them alive on this planet long enough to line up a support system. I'm pretty sure I know the answer.

Thank you for your time.

TK

I have suffered from anxiety for most of my adult life and can honestly say that cannabis has been one of my main supports. As I get older I found a combination of regular physical activity mixed with minimal cannabis usage helps to minimize and maintain my anxiety.

J

I think putting anxiety on the qualifying conditions to receive medical marijuana would be beneficial. As well as the other new qualifying conditions.

KS

I am a grateful medical patient, and want to share with you briefly how cannabis has helped me live with PTSD. My life has been filled with decades of physical and emotional abuse from a terrible childhood. I struggle every day to maintain participation in the real world because of a wide variety of triggers that numb me and send me into my mind for days.

The best thing that I've found to take that pressure off of myself is cannabis. It's a miracle how quickly the symptoms go away and I can breathe again. I'm able to sort out my issues, connect with loved ones, feel gratitude and look introspectively into my character flaws.

The reason I feel this is relevant is that crippling anxiety is the #1 symptom I struggle with when it comes to my medically diagnosed PTSD. I feel for anyone else that suffers from intense anxiety and I fully support this as a medical condition that should qualify for medical cannabis. Many that suffer with this disorder are buying off the streets and worrying about legal or employment troubles. Adding this condition would remove that burden for so many good people that just want to be a fully-functioning member of society.

Furthermore, I would like to see the program expand and allow patients to select different strains of cannabis. Indica strains soothe my anxiety more than sativas which often will increase it.

Thank you for considering this as a condition, and please continue to expand this program. Please make cannabis more readily available at home so patients don't feel the need to smuggle from other states or buy from shady dealers on the street.

KF

I'm writing to express my support for anxiety to be a qualifying condition for medical cannabis use. As someone who has lived with depression and anxiety along with PTSD, cannabis has greatly improved my anxiety symptoms. To the point that I no longer need to take other medications that had adverse side effects. Please add anxiety to your list of qualifying conditions. I believe many people will benefit from it.

MS

I'm just chiming in on the fact that medical cannabis definitely helps me with the anxiety that stems from my PTSD. I got PTSD in the Army where I served as an infantryman on multiple deployments on active duty. The way I understand it, everyone who has PTSD also has both anxiety and depression, to some degree. A lot of the help we get from medical cannabis, for PTSD, also helps address the anxiety and depression we suffer. It only makes sense that both anxiety and depression be added to the list of qualifying medical conditions, since those of us with PTSD are already seeking relief for those conditions, and getting it with medical cannabis. It is justifiable to allow sufferers of anxiety (and depression) to seek out alternative treatments for their conditions that don't involve the side effects of many of the other prescription drugs available for these conditions.

I have gotten rid of five of my former prescriptions from the VA, and replaced them with medical cannabis. I do not miss the side effects of those old medications one bit. I think we should make medical cannabis available to people in these situations. Thank you.

BM

I use medical cannabis for pain. I also suffer from anxiety and depression. The cannabis helps alleviate anxiety to help me get through the day. Please add this as a qualifying condition so that others may be helped as I am.

LH

I'm endorsing the addition of ANXIETY as a "qualifying" medical condition for patients to receive medical marijuana therapy. Anecdotally speaking, as a current patient in the MN medical marijuana program, a patient suffering from ANY medical condition is anxiety provoking. ANXIETY like PAIN, is a purely subjective experience by nature exhibited through some physiological manifestations but primarily through the patient's unique EXPERIENCE and resultant behavior. In other words, it is not quantifiable.

We all understand that to treat a patient therapeutically, assessment parameters must integrate both QUANTIFIABLE and QUALITATIVE measures to treat the WHOLE PATIENT. "Anxiety" similar to "Pain" incorporates physical quantifiable symptoms, increased heart rate, rapid breathing, and other "stress" responses that are appreciably different than a patient's base line.

The qualitative manifestations of an chronic anxiety state, similar to pain, are quantifiable in and of themselves. The medical condition I have which qualifies my being a patient in the program causes me personally, great anxiety. This "anxiety state" of dealing with a CHRONIC DISEASE is in itself a BARRIER to healing and best possible life. I have found by using medical marijuana for the past year and a half, that I have been able to MANAGE MY ANXIETY by cannabinoid based medicines. In turn, with DECREASED ANXIETY has come IMPROVED SELF CARE which begets BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE because with LESS ANXIETY I am A MORE PRODUCTIVE CITIZEN.

By excluding those who suffer from ANXIETY from experiencing the possible benefits of medical grade cannabinoid medications is withholding LIFE SAVING instruments based solely on bias, politics, ignorance, and cruelty.

Lastly, each and every qualifying medical "condition" currently on the list is ANXIETY provoking in and of itself. Treating the ANXIETY that comes from managing life living with a CHRONIC CONDITION is what cannabinoid based medicine dose and needs to be made available in its safe, prescribed manner. Thank you.

RM

I am on medical cannabis, my qualifying condition is Crohn's disease. I am also deeply grieving, had aches and pains from previous surgeries and have i have medical anxiety. Since I have been taking medical cannabis ALL OF THESE CONDITIONS HAVE IMPROVED. I fully endorse that anxiety be approved as a qualifying condition. Also anything that can be done to reduce the price, needs to happen soon, before we go completely broke and have to choose between purchasing the medical cannabis that we need to make it through our day and paying our bills & buying groceries. Thank you.

DG

Hello, my name is (...). I have suffered from anxiety and have been on Alprazolom for years. I started the Medical Cannabis program for severe pain relief and something unbelievable happened.

My anxiety disappeared immediately!

I didn't need my alprazolom anymore. I didn't have any attacks and didn't crave it! Reaching for a pill didn't even enter my mind. I had to start it and wean myself off it per my doctor because my body was addicted to it! I had zero anxiety (which runs in my family) and I called one of my children who lives where Cannabis is legal. I told him about Cannabis 100% taking my anxiety away and I got an ecstatic response from my son. He was using cannabis for anxiety and it was gone! He was so excited. He was happy and content. My other son and daughter suffer as well, but they live in Minnesota where it is not legal yet.

Please add Anxiety to your list of approved conditions!!!

I can now handle any stress and anxiety with ease.

I feel great getting rid of all these pills that harm my body!

Thank you for your help to approve this condition and to legalize cannabis!

MC

I have anxiety and chronic pain. They don't give medications to us if your on pain meds. This is a gross disservice to those that need treatments. I can use my medical marijuana to assist with anxiety a horrible curse to live with. It's like your at war and hyper alert. This gives the mind and body a break from white knuckling. My primary use is for pain however. Grateful.

DW

I have many ailments that cause me chronic pain from Sciatica, degenerative discs, Fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Psoriatic arthritis. Chiari malformation are just a few. With these are several mental health conditions that feed off that pain and my surroundings. Bi-polar, PTSD & Anxiety w/mild paranoia & claustrophobia. My anxiety causes me to shake, have a panic attack and nauseousness just at the thought of leaving my home. Public transit and shopping for necessities can be a traumatic experience. Crowds scared me before covid. Now I'm terrified to leave my room. Cannabis helps ease the effects of these disorders, decreases my "jumpiness" from PTDS, relaxes my muscles/nerves easing the chronic pain. More relaxed to endure the obstacles of life. Cannabis is in my life daily however the price to be "qualified" in MN and the amount of product are out of my league so I am forced to find it on my own. (Certified once cost me \$850. MN Medical cannabis product \$100+ for a weeks supply.) I can get an ounce of smoke that lasts all month for \$275.) The options for medical cannabis suck in Minnesota!! It is less effective, extremely more expensive (more than double street value) and tastes horrible!! We also do not have enough locations for the disabled to get to. The easiest one for me is a 2 1/2 hour bus ride one way. I already have trouble traveling 20 minutes from my home!! Minnesota needs to get with the program and be willing to open the gates to way more options and much lower prices or at least better product for the price you charge!!!

YW

I would like to suggest cannabis for treating anxiety. I have two adult sons with Adrenal insufficiency and one issue is with anxiety. Rather than take additional cortisone they have been able to self medicate with cannabis as it relieves the anxiety. Please consider this when deciding on the next approved condition.

Thank you.

NW

My son was just re-certified for his 3rd year of medical cannabis for complex ptsd. I have been his caregiver throughout his diagnosis and treatment. Anxiety is a huge component of complex ptsd. He went from missing 40 class periods per quarter at school to holding down the same job for 2 years and perfect attendance, after his certification for medical marijuana. He is now a full time college student, managing well. It took time for us to get the dosing and the percentage of thc low enough to minimize the negative and capitalize on the positive aspects of medical marijuana. This is a tool that when properly managed by licensed pharmacological staff, will greatly improve the quality of life for those suffering from anxiety. Please consider not only authorizing it but allowing for it to be covered by insurance. The cost will be prohibitive for many.

TA

I suffer from anxiety and think marijuana should be open to me as well. Unless you have this problem it might be hard to understand but it is disabling.

MJ

Anxiety should definitely be a qualifying condition for medical cannabis. More people than ever are very anxious about getting Covid 19 and dying from it. Too much anxiety won't help. Cannabis can help people relax.

JD

I believe that Medical Marijuana for Anxiety Should be legal. I think there is a lot of science to prove that it's an effective treatment.

MV

The medical cannabis has helped me so much with a few other things besides anxiety. The help with the anxiety has made me so much with not being so withdrawn.

HW

My Name is (...), and I'm a registry member. My qualifying condition is Aspergers Syndrome/Autism, but I deal with anxiety on a regular basis also. The past 7 months with my prescription for cannabis has completely changed my outlook on life. My Patient Self Evaluations are filled with success stories of improved sleep, diet, BMI, employment and overall happiness. My Wife supports me and my marriage is stronger than ever. Cannabis for me is a wonderful tool to add to my toolbox. I benefit in more than one way as it greatly improves my ability to manage my autism and dramatically helps curb anxious behaviors. Anxiety has been a byproduct of my autism since I was young. It's nice to have help navigating those moments. My appreciation for breathing easy is still new found.

I support adding anxiety to the list of qualifying conditions. My own personal experiences are proof that it's feasible for other people to have success also. Relief for those people could change their lives too, just like mine. Thank You for your time.

KK

I am taking medical cannabis for sleep apnea, and as a result of my treatment my anxiety is also improved. Therefore I am in support of adding it as a qualifying condition on its own merit.

JH

I take medical cannabis for sleep apnea and I know it also helps with my anxiety. I think it would be a good idea to add anxiety to the list of acceptable conditions for medical cannabis.

LM

Please include anxiety for existing condition for medical cannabis. It has helped me to overcome many situations as a combat veteran from Vietnam War anxiety and hypervigilance are always with me.

JG

My name is Amy and I suffer from severe panic attacks due to my current illnesses. I have been taking medical cannabis for those illnesses. When I am not on a regular dosing of my medication, my panic attacks are terrible and greatly interfere with my quality of life. I am a big supporter of adding anxiety to the list of qualifying conditions for medical cannabis. I do not want to see people struggle with anxiety and then not have access to this life changing medication. Please consider my input based on my experience with medical cannabis. I am excited to see this progress happening in Minnesota. Thank you for your time.

AG

I am a 47 year old male who has been a medical cannabis patient since December of 2018.

While it has helped tremendously with my qualifying condition, I have also experienced the beneficial side effect of helping with anxiety and depression.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly taken its toll, it has been surprisingly easier for me to deal with than without medical cannabis.

I feel like I tend to have higher highs and lower lows than many people, and medical cannabis has helped me tolerate the uncertainty that this experience has introduced in my life, as well as keep perspective through this tough time.

I sincerely thank everyone involved for this program and hope it can help many more people who may be suffering from anxiety and/or depression.

JG

I am a current medical marijuana patient. I also suffer from severe anxiety due to years of on going trauma. When I was finally legally allowed to ingest this medicine it worked immediately by letting my muscles release, I was in control of my thoughts that had finally flowed down, it allowed me to finally get some healing sleep, I could go on forever of all the benefits the issue is it is not affordable at all forcing people to the streets where they're ingesting God knows what. Help Minnesotans. Help the people. End the suffering because you CAN!!!!
THANK YOU.

NW

These all should be qualifying conditions. I have anxiety, I have medical cannabis for other reasons, but my anxiety is under control. My sister has anxiety, she takes pills from her doctor, does not qualify for medical cannabis and she is still having a lot of anxiety issues. Medical Cannabis has saved my life in more than one way. My family, friends, professors, will all testify to this. Edibles and Leaf should also be options for medical cannabis. I also believe it should be used to help ex drug addicts, I am one who cannabis has again I state, literally saved my life. I'm sixteen years clean, I would not have made it without Cannabis. Sincerely in support to help save others lives.

BD

I would like for you to consider anxiety for a qualifying medical condition to qualify for the Minnesota cannabis program.

I was diagnosed with prostate cancer a number of years ago. This diagnosis has created a lot of stress and anxiety in my life. I have had appointments with Dr. Mirman's office to see if I would qualify for the cannabis program. So far I do not qualify and my current doctors have prescribed a number of medications that I do not care to take regularly. One thing Dr. Mirman mentioned was that stress and anxiety that is so acute as to lead to vision problems, could be construed as PTSD. Since my cancer diagnosis I have developed central serous chorioretinopathy which I was told was caused by my stress and anxiety. Getting certified would enable me to stop taking some of the medications I have already been prescribed.

MD

Please allow people with anxiety a chance for relief by using medical cannabis. Would give hope for many
KH

I am writing you today to ask you to add Anxiety as a qualifying condition for medical marijuana. I know several people with extreme anxiety who benefit from using marijuana. It would be beneficial if these people could get relief legally with medical marijuana. Thank you.

KK

I would like to add my comment concerning adding anxiety to the list of qualifying conditions for medical cannabis.

I myself live with this condition. It can debilitating and life altering. It has stopped me from reaching my full potential. It affects my ability to interact effectively professionally and socially. I also live with PTSD and medical cannabis has helped me immensely. I believe that medical cannabis is a viable option for addressing anxiety as well. Thank you for your consideration.

JB

I qualify for and benefit from medical cannabis for two conditions: PTSD and sleep apnea. As a two-time cancer survivor of ten years, I also struggle with ongoing anxiety, as many others do. It is my belief that it would be extremely helpful to many people if MDH would add anxiety to the list of qualifying medical conditions.

BT

Please please please accept this petition. As someone who has had anxiety for almost 10 years now and takes citalopram daily I would love the opportunity just to try and see if I could get off of my citalopram and substitute with medical marijuana. I've read a few things about how it has helped people get off of the citalopram and has reduced the side effects of coming off of it. I have tried many times but the effects from coming off gradually have been too bad to actually stop taking it. I ask you to please pass this, as someone who is 28, doesn't smoke marijuana. I would be so grateful for the opportunity to at least see if it can help me and get me off these pills.

MS

Thank you for your attention today. I cannot speak to the other two conditions under consideration, but I am a 'poster boy' for the positive effects that cannabis can have on anxiety. I have suffered from anxiety since I was a child. The reasons for this are myriad and too intricate to explain in this missive, but they had devastating effects on me and created much of the anxiety I deal with every day. Each aspect of my anxiety creates physical as well as mental and emotional disruption in my daily life, and being able to relax and stop my mind from racing is key to helping me lead a more productive life. As a long time cannabis user, I am well aware that this treatment is not for everyone. What I do know is that it has proven itself to be the only thing that can address my several issues, including my sometimes severe anxiety, without the major side effects so often associated with artificially created substances. I know I am not alone in both suffering from anxiety and being someone who benefits from using cannabis to combat it. Cannabis has historically been used for medicinal purposes and although it does not have the 'all or nothing' effect of some more current substances, it is far better for humans to use than some chemical creations that are currently being utilized today. It is my hope that you will take a stand for a more option-based healthcare model that includes more natural healing methods and practices for a broader application towards illness to ensure better health in our society. Again, thank you for your time.

DI

Thank you for reading. Please know I support the use of medical cannabis in the treatment for anxiety. SO much better than the alternative daily pharmaceuticals, or even "as needed" pharmaceuticals. No side effects! So very many people, esp in these very difficult times, are experiencing anxiety.

Please support this movement? Thank you

CR

I am writing to let you know that since I have started medical cannabis for my intractable pain and PTSD which both come with high anxiety. I can say that I am able to function properly and get through my day easier. I have also been clean and sober for almost three years thanks to medical cannabis. And that's because my thoughts and emotions are more controlled. Honestly this medicine is a miracle for people like me. I'd probably be heavy on drugs or alcohol due to all the pain and emotions I deal without if it were not for medical cannabis

Thank you. And please consider medical cannabis as a great alternative for those with anxiety or some type of unstable mental or physical disorder.

BM

I've got a generalized anxiety disorder the cannabis I receive helps with can be debilitating symptoms. It can give me immediate relief along with my other meds. I wind up being more functional.

GT

I've suffered from insomnia in the past and do cope with crippling anxiety on a day-to-day basis. Adding these conditions to the list of those acceptable to qualify for medical marijuana would be a blessing to many, especially those of us who have difficulty day to day dealing with the symptoms of each. Severe anxiety and depression both come with my diagnosis of Tourette's Syndrome and would both be greatly eased with having access to this greatly effective medicine.

KW

From a very young age I suffered from mental, physical and sexual abuse. Today, as an adult male, I suffer from severe depression and anxiety affecting both my personal and professional life.

My support for medical cannabis has evolved due to personal experiences that led me to distrust big pharma. At around age 7 my mother took me to a psychiatrist and I recall my mom receiving a prescription. I don't know the name of the medication but it was to help with her depression and anxiety, being a single professional mother of 3. The outcome of her diagnosis was a incorrectly written prescription that almost ended her life due to an unintentional overdose.

Fast forward to a young adult attending Normandale Community College, I was experiencing severe depression and sought medical care. Throughout my care, I received two prescriptions for depression. The first medication did nothing for me. The second medication definitely boosted me up but at a cost. I recall going to a job interview after taking my prescription earlier that day basically turning me into a zombie for lack of a better term, making it uncomfortable for me and the person carrying out the interview. This last experience definitely pushed me over the edge away from pharmaceuticals and since have been living with untreated severe depression and anxiety my whole adult life.

Medical cannabis so far has been the only medication that has worked for me without the dangerous side effects and slowing me down. Before bed it helps me relieve the tension and stress from the severe anxiety that day. being able to get a good night's rest is extremely important.

It also helps me greatly during the day especially facing today's life challenges around Covid. When mixed 50/50 with CBD, I am able to function without the effects of the THC being able to concentrate with an uplifted mood. It also helps me greatly dealing with the severe anxiety living with others and their noise. When under severe anxiety which has been 100% since Covid, every single noise is amplified 1000 times, unable to concentrate, feeling like garbage, unable to focus making it harder for me to reason which it has affected my relationships with my loved ones tremendously.

I have seen treatment work on family members with chemical dependencies. And I am living proof that to a certain extent, Medical Cannabis does have great positive impact on individuals with severe depression and anxiety. In addition to medicating, exercise and better food and life choices is obvious a factor as well.

My only concern now that ex Governor Dayton is no longer in office, the state needs to ***quickly*** avoid the same mistakes the states of California and most recently Illinois have made. Ex Governor Dayton made it so stringent to obtain Medical Cannabis that it created a black market. Sometimes, I wonder if it was intentional. Besides the point, if you look at the black markets created in Illinois and California due to the stringent requirements, it completely dissolves the purpose for having a well regulated state Cannabis program. People are suffering now, they need Medical Cannabis now. Not 4 years from now or have to jump through crazy hoops to find relief. No one suffering under any condition should have to risk their well being to find relief.

Please, no more stringent regulations. Minnesotans need help now and it is your responsibility that this program helps ALL Minnesotans.

Please, no more stringent regulations. Minnesotans need help now and are willing to pay taxes to maintain a safe regulated program. **If you improperly regulate it will create a larger black market and this is NOT WHAT WE WANT.**

Please help me and help others. We want to live and lead normal lives. We want to wake up to a beautiful day with a smile and feel the same when laying back down at the end of the day.

SA

I support the addition of anxiety to the qualifying conditions list to receive medical cannabis. As a patient utilizing cannabis for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, insomnia and anxiety are extremely prevalent symptoms that I endure on a daily basis. Once receiving medical cannabis, I have lessened the amount of prescription and over-the-counter medications that I use for sleep and anxiety/OCD/depression. My nightmares have improved, and I have help falling asleep faster and staying asleep. Cannabis also helps with panic attacks, anxious thought spirals, appetite, and a better sense of well-being. I only have positives for what medical cannabis has done for my treatment — with minimal (if any) side effects.

I highly support adding anxiety to the qualifying conditions list. Let me know if there is any more information that I can provide.

JS

I would love to see anxiety added to the list!!!

AD

I suffer from panic disorder which is anxiety attacks are very hard to maintain and under medication I'm prescribed. The medication I'm on has bad side effects and made me think of thoughts that were bad while on it and allergic reaction to other meds plus the loss of my hair that an ongoing issue. I learned that cannabis has helped curb my anxiety and made me a functional person that is able to work and be myself.

KM

I am hopeful that you will consider anxiety for a condition. I have terrible anxiety and have been on many different medications, I have medical debt for going into the ER thinking I was going to die .The side effects from the meds have been so bad that I cannot function, so I don't take them .I would love the chance to try Marijuana to ease my symptoms and improve my quality of life .I am 55yrs old mom and grandmother. Thank you for your time and consideration.

RG

Please include anxiety in the plan it really does help calm the situations. Truly thank you very much

JJ

Medical marijuana needs to be available with those who have anxiety and depression. From my own personal experience I have not had good experience from medication. I am 22 years old and diagnosed with having anxiety and depression. I have needed to use canmabis from IL to stay afloat especially in these hard times. I am not taking anything strong, just a 1:1 THC/CBD and this has done wonders to my own mental health and anxiety. I feel that those who suffer from anxiety and depression should not be penalized from the law for using what they need for their own health. Please consider and allow for medical marijuana to be eligible to those with anxiety and depression. Thank you

MTH

I have anxiety it stops my day it's so hard for me to function, so hard for me to comprehend any kind of tasks, my heart beats Hard I can't calm down, Feels like you're suffocating. It feels like I'm going crazy.

If cannabis can help I would love to try it please help us, in Gods name.

KC

I am very concerned you are adding anxiety to a potential list of medicinal cannabis use, according to everything I've read marijuana has been genetically altered to remove the active ingredient that could have potentially helped that mental health issue, with the increased THC levels it actually increases levels of serious mental

health issues like depression and anxiety. please reconsider this. There has to be something better than another drug that can cause more problems with bipolar, potential schizophrenia depression and anxiety. I think you really need to go over this with the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

Anonymous

I hope the group will look at Hines et al (2020), where you'll find cannabis linked to Generalized Anxiety Disorder. (as well as the DSM-5)

JJ

I am writing today to express my support for adding ANXIETY to a list of conditions treatable by Medical Marijuana. First some background on why I felt it was important to respond to your request for input.

I am a 36 year old male, married home-owner with kids. Annual income ~\$165k. My wife and I are both life long Minnesotans who decided to settle back home after an aggressive recruiting process by the wife's employer. I use -- she does not.

I suffer from clinical depression with acute generalized anxiety disorder. I have been taking my mental health very seriously for about 5 years. I went to counseling, and I was prescribed an antidepressant (fluoxetine). The fluoxetine was very effective at fighting the depression, but less so at treating the anxiety. I tried various methodologies for suppressing anxiety -- including mindfulness, meditation and a focus on preventing anxiety triggers, but they failed to remedy my intense anxious fits. Under the advice of my therapist I was urged to smoke marijuana recreationally (illegally) to treat my anxiety issues. From her standpoint my brain chemistry was stable and good, my therapist actually promoted me out of therapy because I had made so much progress. That was 18 months ago.

Throughout covid I struggled with my mental health and anxiety by increasing my Marijuana intake. Surprisingly I seem to have done much better than most of my friends and family who I can tell are at their wits end. Due to the increased consumption (and 80's era DARE program in my head) I decided to stop smoking for a while to see if my anxiety came back -- and if those symptoms were true anxiety or they were symptoms of withdrawal. I scheduled an appointment with my primary care, with the explicit intent of telling him about my marijuana use. During this time I was marijuana free for 3 weeks -- my mental health rapidly deteriorated. The initial withdrawal lasted 2-4 days, but after that I started to replace marijuana with alcohol. The liquor use increased dramatically and my depression resurfaced in a period of about 1 week. I lost a whole day to depression for the first time in 2 years during this time. It was a full blown relapse.

I made it to my primary care and spilled the beans about my smoking. I was terrified they would call CPS and take my kids away even though I am a great father. After listening to me and talking about the issue with me like I did with you, he suggested I start using marijuana again (for anxiety) and doubled my fluoxetine dosage. With a long term goal of no longer needed the marijuana for anxiety. He actually suggested this over Benzodiazepines -- as they too are habit forming and addictive.

That conversation was unnecessarily awkward for both my doctor and I. He had ethical medical stuff to worry about, and I had to worry about being seen as a 'degenerate drug user'. HOWEVER this conversation was the best thing that has happened in my life in years. I walked out feeling like a new person, because I didn't feel like a drug user anymore rather a person trying to do what is best for his own brain and for his family (now confirmed by two medical professionals).

After I left the doctor I picked up my illegal marijuana and drove home where I partook. By the end of the next day I was basically 'myself' again and all I needed to do was have a pipe.

The medicinal effect of marijuana for anxiety is REAL. I can attest to it personally and I promise you it is no construct of addiction and substance abuse. I have a close family member who is struggling with serious substance abuse issues -- so I feel very cognizant of the effects drugs can have.

I will also add that I do think that my brain works differently than many other people in relation to marijuana however and I would not recommend it as a blanket treatment to everyone for anxiety -- but it works for ME, and privately it seems to work for many of my close friends and family as well.

If you DON'T add anxiety to a list of medical cannabis uses -- nothing really changes for me. I still get what I want, when I want. I am not really worried about getting a misdemeanor and I would never do anything to warrant more serious charges.

If you DO add anxiety to a list of medical cannabis uses -- LOTS of things change for me:

1. I no longer have to feel like a criminal for trying to keep my brain healthy.
2. I can keep my doctor in the loop about my usage and adjust when needed.
3. My doctor stays more informed as to my condition.
4. I don't have to feel guilty when my neighbors come over and smell my house. I have a prescription.
5. The whole process becomes normalized and more acceptable, which helps a great deal for my self esteem
6. I might even one day get co-pays from my insurance, which would help because Marijuana is expensive.
7. I might be able to try different forms of medical use like ingestion or tinctures.

I felt obligated to share my candid experience with you -- even though in doing so I admitted to crimes. If this helps treat or prevent other people from experiencing anxiety the world will be a better place.

DR

I am a concerned Minnesotan writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety.

I became a Cannabis Patient 1 year ago. I was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease 27 years ago. I have experienced major surgery during this period and have taken recommended Rx's from Dr's as well.

I have experienced phenomenal results from Medicinal Cannabis. Far greater results than ever before. My Crohn's flare-ups are, and have always been precipitated by underlying anxiety. No Rx meds designed for Crohn's provide mental health benefits. This is key to beating the disease. My Crohn's has become dormant since the introduction of Medical Cannabis into my life. Cannabis keeps me calm and minimizes anger and irritability, which ALL have contributed to my flare-ups in the past.

After 1 year of Treating my Crohn's Disease, it has become very clear to me that NO Rx can match the benefits provided by Cannabis. This treatment plan has saved my life. I was so deep into depression and self-destructive thinking that I was on the verge of leaving this world.

My current state of mind while being treated with medical cannabis is stable, happy, confident and am so glad to be here. It makes me wonder where my fate would be at this moment without the Minnesota Medicinal Cannabis Program being in place.

I invite further discussion on this topic while I stand proud as a Patient of the MN. Medicinal Cannabis Program. Please reach out to me anytime.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read my story.

BB

Hi my name is marlinee Garcia and I'm from Minneapolis mn. I'm 24 years old and I just wanted to say that I believe cannabis saved me in the past with anxiety. It also helped me to stop drinking alcohol and I just wanted to say I'm great full for it and I know it can help many more people in the same way. Thank you!

MG

I am a 46 year old woman who loves life but suffers from extreme anxiety. I have the past 15 years but 6 years ago my son almost died in my arms and I now suffer from PTSD which just makes my anxiety worse. We've tried many non benzodiazepines but they did not help. Now I am again taking Xanax which I hate depending on a little

blue pill to keep me calm & able to accomplish things. I think medical marijuana for a more range of things, one being anxiety. I think it would help with the addiction pandemic we are going through. Marijuana kills nobody. These drugs are not only leading to major addiction problems but are killing people. #LegalizeMarijuana
JS

I am all for the addition of those three qualifying conditions. I am 46 years old and have been suffering from severe anxiety now for 20 plus years. I have been on a number of different medications throughout the years, with some having bad side effects, such as sleep issues, eating/appetite issues, as well as sexual issues. I have been searching for years now to find something that will help without all the side effects, that actually increase my anxiety.
BH

I'm writing this email because of my wife's condition we been married for 8 years and I've seen tru my eyes the ups and downs of anxiety it's been a struggle for our marriage but I've stuck around because I love her. She has tried medication for many years but it hasn't really helped much. It would be great if someone could come up with something new to treat anxiety.
LB

Sickle Cell disease

I am writing to you today as a hematologist whose primary scope of clinical care and research is focused on sickle cell disease (SCD) in all age groups. As you may know, SCD affects an estimated 100,000 Americans, primarily those of sub-Saharan African descent. We estimate upwards of 600-700 live in our state, though to date, there are no national or state databases to accurately know for sure. I have been working with the Minnesota Department of Health along with other regional providers to understand SCD burdens in the state and improve our understanding of both prevalence and disease morbidity/mortality. Unfortunately, SCD is the paradigm for the health inequities we face in our country, as most individuals with SCD are Black, live in urban environments, and are in a fragile state of affairs both financially and in regards to healthcare optimization.

Part of these inequities from the lack of available pharmacologic treatments for pain crises, the most common symptom we see, particularly in adults. Pain crises often lead to recurrent admissions and/or requests for opioid infusions for a substantial minority of our patients. Nearly 25% of our adults at M Health Fairview have sought acute care for pain management more than once a month on average in 2020 and one has had over 100 visits in 9 months, and all high-utilizing patients are on chronic opioids to provide any modicum of day-to-day relief. Most of the patients are on standard-of-care hydroxyurea and a few are on recently-approved therapies for pain crisis prevention, but many of our patients still require chronic opioid therapy.

Opioids have a strong indication for helping with SCD pain crises but we know (and our patients recognize) the risks of chronic opioid use. Yet we have little else to offer since research has been slow to respond to patient needs on this topic. In addition, the stigmatization of opioid use on top of being Black and often urban working class makes for daily challenges in our hospital system to receive appropriate care. I agree that opioid overuse is a major issue in our state and others. However, individuals with SCD did not drive the opioid epidemic (Ruta NS, Ballas SK. *Pain Medicine* 2016 <https://doi.org/10.1093/pm/pnw074>), but they suffer the consequences of the restrictions. With this in mind as our current standard of care, and notwithstanding our desperate need for mental health and social work help in SCD, we need to have safer options. Medical marijuana can be one of those alternatives.

The data are growing stronger that medical marijuana offers analgesic and other symptomatic benefits for a wide variety of chronic illnesses. SCD needs to be added to this mix. Anecdotally, I estimate that 20-25% of my patients admit to marijuana use to help manage pain and stress related to SCD. Other areas of the country, particularly New Haven, CT and Baltimore, have been leading the way in describing the clinical experience for CBD oil or alternative formulations to reduce opioid prescriptions. The team at Yale just published data showing that medical marijuana reduced pain-related admissions for SCD, which could arguably lead to a domino effect cost savings for medical systems (Curtis SA, et al. *Blood Advances* Aug 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1182/bloodadvances.2020002325>). Dr. Kalpna Gupta, formerly a long-time faculty member at the University of Minnesota, has published several articles on the potential benefits and risks of cannabis and cannabis derivatives on SCD. Admittedly, some data have not found the same types of significant benefits (e.g. vaporized cannabis, Abrams DI, et al *JAMA Network Open* 2020 doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.10874) so there may be nuances to the derivation used in treatment. Our data is unfortunately limited to small single-institution studies due to lack of research support, but that is based heavily on the limited national funding for this clinical research. These funding realities are similar to other facets of clinical practice and should not limit the openness to adding SCD to the diseases cleared for medical marijuana.

Much is still to be learned about cannabis and cannabis derivatives in all diseases. However, similar to what has been true for other disease groups like cancer for years, SCD is frequently left out of the discussion and approvals of novel research and therapies at the outset. The lack of previous approval for medical marijuana in SCD perpetuates this inequity. This must change. We cannot hope to offer optimal care for SCD in the face of tightening opioid prescription restrictions without having non-opioid alternatives like medical marijuana available. One of my colleagues, Dr. Asmaa Ferdjallah, developed an extensive policy this spring and I encourage you and your team to read (or re-read) it thoughtfully and carefully, as she has outlined methods to move forward on the cannabis discussion for our patients (<https://pubs.lib.umn.edu/index.php/phr/article/view/2927/2360>). Medical marijuana may not work for everyone, either by patient choice or trial treatment courses, but without it on the approved list, our patients will continue to seek it through less transparent methods. I encourage you to see the larger picture, one in which approval of medical marijuana both takes a step towards reducing inequities but also may help reduce healthcare costs, and approve SCD as an indication in the near future.

Alexander A. Boucher, MD
Assistant Professor of Hematology
Department of Pediatrics and Internal Medicine
M Health Fairview

Tic Disorder

I absolutely recommend adding Tic Disorder to qualifying conditions for medical cannabis. My son has Tourettes and has been in the cannabis program since it opened. He has seen a drastic reduction of both motor and vocal tics. He has hundreds fewer tics daily. Cannabis has changed his life.

CP

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) is the world's largest neurology specialty society representing more than 36,000 neurologists and clinical neuroscience professionals. The AAN is dedicated to promoting the highest quality patient-centered neurologic care. A neurologist is a physician with specialized training in diagnosing, treating, and managing disorders of the brain and nervous system. These disorders affect one in six people and include conditions such as multiple sclerosis (MS), Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke, migraine,

epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, ALS, and spinal muscular atrophy.

In its 2019 guideline [Practice Guideline Recommendations Summary: Treatment of Tics in People with Tourette Syndrome and Chronic Tic Disorders](#) the AAN reviewed evidence for tetrahydrocannabinol for tics in adults.

There was low confidence data (one class III, one class II) and the AAN recommended physicians may consider tetrahydrocannabinol for adults with tics with appropriate medical supervision and education.

We greatly appreciate this opportunity to express the views of the AAN.

BS

My name is (...) and I am a licensed social worker in the State of Minnesota. I also have significant OCD and Tourette's Syndrome since I was six years old. Throughout my career I've attempted to speak at panels like this and absolutely nothing happens afterwards. I need at least 5-10 minutes to discuss what it's like to be someone on the front lines who also has to overcome Tourette's Syndrome, how marijuana helps people with Tourette's syndrome, and the issues that arise when considering who can actually utilize this program. As a social worker, I am not allowed to take any THC or cannabis-based products that would actually help me throughout the day. Instead, I struggle with OCD, Tourette's, constant anxiety, and depression without the ability to utilize a proven intervention for Tourette's Syndrome: Marijuana. I am simply asking for more than 1 or 2 minutes, because that is not enough time to make a point. I feel that I am an expert on this topic and my views should be heard by the professionals involved as well as the community.

MH

General Comments

Just legalized it. You're product isn't very good anyway

JL

Please approve cannabis for all potential qualifying conditions and let the doctor and patient decide the pros and cons of the treatment.

BF

In my opinion they all should be, I see so many people suffer with different diseases, why not give it a try instead of pumping people with pharmaceuticals...

SS

I am in my 70's, my health is such I would benefit greatly from Cannabis. However, it is so expensive to get a prescription and then to purchase it, that I am out of the loop. If I was on welfare I could get it free. That is wrong. Who helps me?

BC

We all know it can pretty much help with everything and if it's completely legal it will be much more affordable and safer for those that actually need it!

DA

Just another way for MINNESOTA to hike up the prices again. More problems...more money out the patient's pocket....Minnesota IS ROBBING THE MEDICAL MARIJUANA COMMUNITY! FACTS!

AD

MN is very far behind in qualifying medical conditions. People are still seeking this treatment, except instead of receiving treatment from safe/trusted dispensaries Minnesotans are turning to the black market. Here are a list of conditions to qualify in Florida - a state who is handling this the right way:

- Anorexia
- Anxiety
- Arthritis
- Back Pain
- Cachexia
- Diabetes
- Hepatitis C
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Lyme Disease
- Migraine
- Muscle Spasms
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Other Conditions that result in traumatic stress
- Severe & Chronic Pain
- Severe Nausea
- Sickle Cell Anemia
- Spasticity

MB

Marijuana should be legalized period. I have seen medical Marijuana help quite a few people for a variety of reasons including nausea and anxiety. I have used it for both and find it very effective and doesn't knock me out like Valium or Lorazepam. Alcohol is legal and its a poison. What medicinal effects does alcohol have?

Exactly my point. If a politician is worried about losing an election...legalize it, you can bet they would be voted in hands down.

SM

I do believe that the three new conditions will help thousands of Minnesotans, including myself.

MS

This state's med program is a joke. It won't be enough to fix it, but for [...] sake, let people with anxiety have cannabis legally. And then let everyone else have it and end this expensive, racist war on drugs. I'll now go back to using my unregulated, possibly unsafe-quality cannabis, because you [...] give us no other choice.

BC

Please consider restless leg syndrome. Those that have is as bad as I have few medications to use. I suffer from sleep deprivation quite bad. The medications that I have been given have side effects such as dizziness and vomiting so I have to choose the lessor evil each night. I often vomit my medication so that I do not get relief. RLS does not seem to have a specific medication that has been developed just for that problem. It normally becomes worse as the victims age, so I don't see much hope for relief any time soon. If it works for other neurological conditions, it may very well help this one.

BJ

Quit the bull[...] and legalize it and do it on the federal level all the way AND get on with it and DO THE DAMNED RESEARCH AND STOP WASTING TIME!!! FIND THE MEDICINE!!! there is no telling how much life enhancing treatments can be found if the government only would. This [...] has gone on long enough!!! Just get on with it damnit!!!

LB

I was wondering if you could talk about how putting some elderly, children, babies and others in the same building such as an apartment as those with skunk smelling drugs. I live in an apartment which is non smoking and yet I still smell skunk and I have asthma. If this ever gets passed where anyone can inhale this and everyone has to be able to be around it and smell it that would be awful. Inhaling this even in any form should not be legal!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Anonymous

Thats nice to qualify as I do, but when its hard to find the annual \$200.00 in addition to the monthly cost it really doesn't matter if a person qualifys.

JC

In my humble opinion, medical cannabis recipients would benefit tremendously with more delivery methods available to them. Also, expanding eligible conditions during this covid-19 pandemic is a big step in the right direction for Mn.

RC

I believe it is in the best interest of those who suffer from tic and anxiety disorders to have a wider range of viable and available treatment options. There is precedent in the state of Minnesota for its approval regarding both candidates.

Medical cannabis has been implemented in the treatment of other illnesses in this State, and across the country. It is already being used for related disorders here in Minnesota. Cannabis is approved for the treatment of Tourette Syndrome, which itself is a tic disorder. It is also being used for PTSD, which often causes complicated and debilitating anxiety. Since it has been approved for the previously mentioned illnesses the State obviously sees value and credibility in its use. This would simply be an expansion on established practices, which have shown enough efficacy to convince the State. We know it works.

People deserve to enjoy their lives. If cannabis can ease the toll on those who are suffering it is the ethical decision to make. It may save someone's life. Thank you

HR

I think it should be legal for every one since it causes people alot of problems being illegal, since police use it as a way to search and stop people with out a good reason, it also does not kill like alcohol or hard drugs and would allow jails to not be so full. Also the state could make profit and stop the abuse of power towards its citizens, medical and recreational use should be legally privileged like a id or drives license

JS

As a resident of Hennepin county, I would like to express my support for expanding our medical marijuana program to include anxiety, sickle cell, and tic. There is evidence supporting the idea that symptoms of these

conditions can be improved with medical marijuana. As someone who suffers from an anxiety disorder, I believe having access to this treatment would improve my quality of life considerably. Thank you.

TH

I am 19 years old, and currently a registered member in the Minnesota Medical Cannabis program. I have been registered since 2018. Throughout my time as a member, I have gone to both of the two dispensaries currently available to patients. I feel as though I have experienced enough to form an opinion on what is necessary for the MN Cannabis program.

Regarding the newly proposed qualifying conditions, I believe adding Anxiety, Sickle Cell, and Tic disorder would be incredibly beneficial to Minnesota residents. However, this does not even begin to scratch at the surface. Just below there are many diseases that continue to cripple people that have-

- a) Become resistant to their medications.
- b) Take the medication but have severe side effects.
- c) No known medication/treatment for said disease.
- d) Treatment not viable, patient is near end of life.
- e) A combination of any of the above.

Although studies are limited, the ones we have so far conclude that chemicals THC and CBD in cannabis can treat an incredibly large spectrum of diseases, seen and unseen. I am unsure as to why Minnesota continues to be such a progressive state but we can't seem to include more people in our programs.

I would be interested in coming in and speaking to the panel, or having a direct phone conversation. I hope this comment will be read by the right person.

My final thoughts would be to add the three to the list of conditions, but why are we adding so little at a time? Minnesotans need cannabis now.

Thank you,

AD

What we need more than anything is for Minnesota's medicinal program to catch up to all of the other states. I'm in my 50's and have been disabled for 18 years. But, I cannot afford Cannabis the way you provide it. I have to try to find it any way I can, and that is NOT fun for me. Why doesn't Minnesota just sell the whole leaf products so that ALL of us in chronic pain can have access, The way Minnesota has it, MOST OF US CAN'T AFFORD IT. Please consider changing the way Minnesotan's can get relief from their struggles. Thank you for your considerations.

SS

I am writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. In many other states, including California, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, patients suffering from these conditions have been helped because they were able to access medical cannabis as a safe and effective treatment. By expanding our State's list of qualifying conditions, you can help countless Minnesotan's seek the same effective treatment as well.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Thank you.

JA, SF, MS, MP, TB, DJ, KP, RM, SC, KM, HS, RT, DQ, TD, SN, MG, KP, BB, PR, MS, AB, KB, KT, SL, JB, MP, MH, MD, DK, MK, SS, DG, MN, AG, SRN, NR, PV, KF, JO, KG, AT, AB, DP, TP, AS, LG, CR, LS, JB, TP, LD, PD, CI, BL, DH, IB, RH, NKZ, IC, MH, RS, JF, GK, KA, AS, AF, PW, TM, PW, JS, CR, TK, TK, HM, LS (75 identical comments)

In regard to the recent inquiry opened to the public surrounding the potential additional Medical conditions added to the list of qualified conditions, I believe the three proposed additions are all very beneficial to the overall public mental health of Minnesota residents. I have been diagnosed with anxiety and have a long-time friend who struggles with tic disorder. Personally, I have used marijuana in the past in order to cope with anxiety and prevent an anxiety attack when it's apparent one is in the making. It has been beneficial to the the feeling of individual security and control over my overall state of mind. Simply hearing that anxiety may be added to the list of qualifying conditions was enough to put my mind at ease that I may soon be able to legally obtain marijuana in the state of Minnesota. I look forward to hearing the updates regarding this potential new addition! Hope all is well and friends and family are safe and healthy!

CW

I am a concerned Minnesotan writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Research has shown that medical cannabis is an effective treatment to help individuals alleviate symptoms associated with these conditions. By expanding the list of qualifying conditions, more Minnesotans will be able to get effective treatment that work to relieve their often-debilitating symptoms. Additionally, less Minnesotans will have to depend on traditional pharmaceuticals, which can be addictive and have harmful side effects.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder! Thank you.

JF, GM, NJ, DF, BA, AC, AG, DW, EW, KB, KT, CJ, MB, RD, RK, GR, JR, LW, KF, AK, JL, TH, TR, SS, HH, MS, BP, MT, JJ, KK, QA, JF, AO, AL, BM, EG, CM, JC, CR, BN, MG, DR, MM, EG, MK, LT, NG, LR, KW, JM, JE, KT, RZ, JJ, JB, CK, JP, CD, BM, PD, PA, TG, MF, JC, IG, KR, KS, RJ, MB, NC, MP, JE, VJ, DG, BB, MA, AC, ZK, JA, MH, SW, RS, CE, MC, MM, BJ, PY (87 identical comments)

I am writing in support of adding anxiety, sickle cell disease, and Tic disorder to the qualifying conditions for the state of MN's medical marijuana program. Research has shown marijuana to be extremely effective to treat a wide variety of conditions. Many patients suffer from side effects of pharmaceuticals, and expanding the options for treatment makes complete sense. I am hopeful that the state will expand its medical marijuana program and give access to relief for a wider variety of patients. Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. I appreciate your consideration.

KK

All three of these categories should have been and should be included to the list. Thanks you

JK

It is my understanding consideration is being given to expanding the qualifying conditions for the state's medical cannabis program to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Please know that I support this consideration and strongly encourage this expansion.

While I have no direct experience with tic disorder or sickle cell disease, I have been diagnosed with anxiety and prescribed Celexa for the condition. I do not like being reliant on this pharmaceutical and would at least like the option of utilizing medical cannabis to treat my condition.

While I know that you don't have direct authority to expand availability of medical cannabis to include cannabis flower in addition to the limited products available in Minnesota I would support that also. Minnesota's present

program keeps prices unnaturally high and limits too many people from access to this plant medicine that would benefit them.

MH

I am writing in support of adding Anxiety, sickle cell disease and Tic disorder to the cannabis list. It is important and does appear to reduce anxiety and relax people. Thank you

KF

In response let me know if I can personally do anything to help closer to the North Side (I live in Elk River) but yes to approval to all. In a supporter to ha w it legalized so, yes. Thank You!

AN

Anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder should be added to the approved conditions for medical cannabis. It is vital for these patients to receive this as it will generously help their conditions.

MM

I support adding these three as qualified medical conditions: Anxiety, Sickle cell disease, Tic disorder

LM

Medical cannabis is an absolute marvelous natural remedy that's necessary for a number of chemically induced negative effects that stem from misguidance of one's own ignorance towards this amazing plant. One can dispute tons of credited information regarding the beneficiary values from cannabis; it's a wonderful medicine that needs to finally after a long period of ignorance be treated with the necessary respect in the tremendous healing principles, values and miraculous benefits that helps with a number of ailments.

GV

how can a tried & true medicine like cannabis NOT be approved to help with Anxiety, Sickle Cell, & Tic ?????

The only reason cannabis is illegal is due to Harold Jacob Anslinger !

he was "afraid" of losing his job when alcohol prohibition ended.

add up the damage Anslinger has inflicted upon society !

come on Minnesota, quit with the political gamesmanship crap !

get it together & be a leader !

LEGALIZE NOW !!!

DM

I have been using medicinal cannabis for 2yrs. I had horrible nerve pain and was unable to work without my hands swelling and causing much more pain than I could handle. I had tried numerous prescription drugs - all carrying addiction warnings and life threatening side effects. All made from harsh so called FDA approved chemicals. Cannabis is a NATURAL plant-put on this planet for a reason. No chemicals or harsh, harmful additives are added to this plant to aid in relief of numerous medical issues. This plant should be made available to anyone who desires a natural approach to relieve numerous issues our bodies may face.

I have major anxieties that diminish substantially when I use cannabis.

I have had so much relief using cannabis therapy as apposed to pharmaceutical therapy. These new conditions should be added to the present list of qualifying conditions. It should be completely legal for personal use and medicinally.

RB

I have been on medical cannabis for about 3 years. It has helped me with relief from my chronic migraines. Since using it, I have relief so that it allows me to be more active. I can now concentrate more and assist my husband part time in his company.

TW

These prices have got to come down !!! I need the help of CBD and can not afford the dosing I would need to control the inflammation in my body. I'm not sure how in the world THC would help anxiety and see many teens using this as an excuse to get into the program. They say CBD helps with the anxiety caused from THC but I don't experience that. Tell Gov Walz or who ever is in charge of MN lame program that we as patients need more options, better prices and more dispensaries to choose from. This MN program is criminal.

JZ

I carry ALD, Marfans Syndrome, Neuropathy and Fragile Bone Disease. Any and all are benefitted by medical cannabis. It would be nice if it came in gummies or patches.

JJ

I support using medical marijuana for anxiety, sickle cell disease and tic disorder.

JE

I support the following conditions for medical cannabis be added as qualifying conditions: Anxiety, Sickle cell disease and Tic Disorder.

DR

My dearest friend (...) has a rare disorder called Blepharospasm. In clinical terms it is described as a craniofacial movement disorder. As her condition progressed, the spasms intensified, forcing her eyelids to close out of her control on a constant basis. (By the way, it's the uncontrollable closing of the eyelids and not a dysfunction of the eyes for those with this neurological problem.) Sometimes it affects the muscles of her face as well where the muscles spasm. For her, medical cannabis as an adjunctive treatment in combination with maintenance botulinum toxin therapy would be most beneficial.

I am including a link to a [10 patient study on BEB](#) from the University of Minnesota.

JM

I fully support the inclusion of all three potential qualifying conditions under consideration for medical cannabis. I am a medical cannabis patient in MN who has benefited from its use more than a short email has words to explain. Benefits that have given me the ability to live my life no longer confined.

I want these benefits for those who suffer from anxiety, tic disorder, or sick cell disease. Thank You.

AM

I do think, despite the paradoxical effect of initial anxiety which can sometimes occur with cannabis, that Cannabis would be beneficial for some patients, if not all with the conditions discussed herein. The same goes for sickle and ticks disorder.

For your consideration,

I am currently a patient on the registry and I would like to add my comments for the petition to add anxiety, sickle cell, and tic disorder to the list and preferably some language that states, "Any other condition in which a PH.D or nurse practitioner with psychiatric or other prescribing information deems potentially helpful."

I think it would be much easier to let the doctors and patients figure out what works, instead of this insane idea of the department of health managing all these issues directly. For example, you could use the above language, and then add a form and a monthly interview form for the new conditions.

I.e., say a Dr. Decides that anxiety in one of their patients needs some cannabis or might benefit from it. Then, the doctor fills out the single page "Form 420 "to treat with cannabis for non-qualifying condition" form with the unapproved diagnosis and agrees to fill out a certain amount of monthly forms about outcome of the patient to the state. This would prevent these goofy petitions from clogging up the MDH and would shift medicine and the practice of same, where it belongs, with the doctors, nurses and patients.

AM

I'm a Medical Cannabis patient and can tell you firsthand the benefits are life-changing. It has significantly decreased my dependency on alcohol and changed my lifestyle into a fully functioning individual. I'm able to feel what "normal" or "close to normal" feels like again. My relationships with friends and family are no longer suffering. Not to mention being able to sleep throughout the night.

Please compassionately consider adding the following qualifying conditions for Medical Cannabis treatment: Anxiety, Sickle cell disease, and Tic disorder.

JG

I am writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder.

As a current MN cannabis patient, I use my medication for pain management. In the years of using MN medical cannabis for my pain, it coincidentally has been instrumental in alleviating my anxiety and stress. Especially during the pandemic. My life has improved significantly, and become more manageable because of medical cannabis.

So, please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. It's time to let others find relief and have a chance at improving their lives.

Thank you.

TH

I am a concerned Minnesotan writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Research has shown that medical cannabis is an effective treatment to help individuals alleviate symptoms associated with these conditions. By expanding the list of qualifying conditions, more Minnesotans will be able to get effective treatment that work to relieve their often-debilitating symptoms. Additionally, less Minnesotans will have to depend on traditional pharmaceuticals, which can be addictive and have harmful side effects. I am a medical cannabis patient, and although my qualifying condition is intractable pain, the medication I have received through this program has significantly reduced my anxiety symptoms. I cannot begin to express how helpful cannabis has

been for my anxiety symptoms due to PTSD and chronic pain. I want others to have the same access to medicine that I have. I want others to have a chance at a better quality of life and rely less on pharmaceutical medications for symptom management. Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotans struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder! Thank you

AN

I have PTSD and have qualified for Medical Cannabis here in Minnesota. PTSD has a lot of ugly symptoms, one of which is crippling anxiety. The use of cannabis has helped ease my anxiety when it's out of control.

I am writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. In many other states, including California, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, patients suffering from these conditions have been helped because they were able to access medical cannabis as a safe and effective treatment. By expanding our State's list of qualifying conditions, you can help countless Minnesotans seek the same effective treatment as well.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotans struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Thank you.

SA

I am a concerned Minnesotan writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Research has shown that medical cannabis is an effective treatment to help individuals alleviate symptoms associated with these conditions. By expanding the list of qualifying conditions, more Minnesotans will be able to get effective treatment that work to relieve their often-debilitating symptoms. Additionally, less Minnesotans will have to depend on traditional pharmaceuticals, which can be addictive and have harmful side effects.

A little about me personally - I have suffered from generalized anxiety disorder ever since I can remember (even as a very small child). Anxiety runs in my family - everyone in my immediate family has been treated for it. I remember my dad having a panic attack when I was 5 years old. He grabbed me and hugged me to his chest, sobbing "I don't want to die, I don't want to die" over and over again. Throughout my life, my anxiety has ebbed and flowed. During the riots in Minneapolis following the murder of George Floyd, it peaked again and awakened in me some PTSD I didn't realize I was carrying. The PTSD stemmed primarily from an abusive relationship wherein my then-boyfriend broke into my apartment and tried to kill me, and from an apartment fire. At the time of the riots I lived right off of East Lake Street & Hiawatha near the 3rd Precinct. There was a point where there was so much smoke and teargas filling my house, I literally thought my house was on fire. Days & nights filled with the sounds of helicopters, flash-bangs, fireworks, sirens, gunshots, and a steady stream of rioters walking past my house with carts filled with looted items left me terrified for my life. It was after that time that I sought out and received a diagnosis for PTSD, and began my medical cannabis journey. It has been life-changing. I have gone from having vivid nightmares every night where I'd wake up soaked in sweat, crying, to being able to sleep peacefully through the night. My CBD vape keeps me calm throughout stressful workdays, and the THC vape lulls me into a restful slumber at night. It has enabled me to reduce my use of Xanax, a benzodiazapine with dangerous side effects, which I have taken as prescribed for about a decade now. I feel that PTSD and anxiety go hand-in-hand - if you have PTSD, you likely have anxiety. If you have anxiety, it may be caused by PTSD. I don't see a reason to prohibit medical cannabis for anxiety sufferers when there is so much evidence that it's a useful treatment. Though I don't know much about sickle cell disease or tic disorder, I believe in the power of natural medications like cannabis to relieve symptoms from many medical conditions.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder! Thank you.

MS

I am a concerned Minnesotan writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety. Research has shown that medical cannabis is an effective treatment to help individuals alleviate symptoms associated with anxiety. I have used medical cannabis since July, 2019. My qualifying condition is intractable pain and chronic pain. But like many patients I have interconnected other issues including sleep apnea and some anxiety. I have found medical cannabis to be very helpful in reducing my anxiety. Since I began medical cannabis 16 months ago, my symptoms of anxiety have been greatly reduced. I explain the change as a much greater sense within me of peace and calm. Please contact me if you would like further information from me about my personal experience.

By expanding the list of qualifying conditions, more Minnesotans will be able to get effective treatment that work to relieve their often-debilitating symptoms. Additionally, less Minnesotans will have to depend on traditional pharmaceuticals, which can be addictive and have harmful side effects.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder! Thank you.

DC

I am a concerned Minnesotan writing to urge you to expand the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Program's list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder. Research has shown that medical cannabis is an effective treatment to help individuals alleviate symptoms associated with these conditions.

By expanding the list of qualifying conditions, more Minnesotans will be able to get effective treatment that work to relieve their often-debilitating symptoms. Additionally, less Minnesotans will have to depend on traditional pharmaceuticals, which can be addictive and have harmful side effects.

Please expand the State's list of qualifying conditions to help Minnesotan's struggling with anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder! In addition to auto typed amswet id like to add anxiety disorder is a symptom of my PTSD that is well treated by the medical cannabis program and I'm sure people that don't have PTSD and just have anxiety could benefit greatly. Thank you.

AT

I believe anxiety, tic disorder, and sickle cell disease all should be included on the list of disorders/diseases approved for medical Marijuana treatment.

JH

I am a resident of the state of Minnesota and filly support expanding the list of qualifying conditions to include anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder.

Expanding the delivery method to include raw plants and allowing patients and caregivers to grow a limited number of cannabis plants should be done as well.

KB

I would like to support additional medical conditions -- anxiety and sickle cell disease and tic disorder-- to be added to the list of qualifying medical conditions for medical cannabis.

My qualifying condition is PTSD, and anxiety is a huge part of that. Medical cannabis is safer and more effective than other methods. The range of options helps me treat my symptoms more specifically.

I'm a nurse and I have worked with patients with sickle cell disorder. The pain and anxiety and insomnia are debilitating. Medical cannabis would be of huge benefit to these patients and an excellent alternative to opioids.

Expanding access to medical cannabis increases safety for cannabis users with medical issues. Taking our dollars off the black market and putting them towards high quality, pure products, and helping the minnesota economy is a win for everyone.

RB

I support the new conditions for the use of medical cannabis.

SA

I am emailing to express my support for the three potential qualifying conditions. Having a safer alternative to benzodiazepines is a net win for Minnesotans. I moved to Minnesota from a state with a much more broad medical program and an outright legal program; the medical program in MN is frustratingly strict, and it's downright embarrassing explaining how archaic marijuana regulation is in this great state when discussing these matters with people who don't live here.

AL

Please allow a wider set of conditions to the MN mmj program. We have the worst medical cannabis program in the USA. Patients need to be able to grow their own medicine as well, not get expensive medium quality products from 2 big corporations in the state. It's important for flower to be allowed for consumption because patients need options. Restrictions on medical cannabis in the state are limiting the full potential of this industry.

PP

Talk to some of the rural law enforcement who deals with marijuana related crimes that also regularly involve the rarely reported methamphetamine epidemic in Minnesota. It's a gateway drug.. always has been and always will be. Vote no for "medical" marijuana.

AF

I support adding the three additional medical conditions. Add flower as an accepted delivery method.

IL

Please add Anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder to the reasons a person's in MN is able to qualify for medical use of marijuana

MR

I fully support the addition of the three new qualifying conditions to Minnesota's medical cannabis program. In addition, I also support the addition of adding smokable flower as an accepted delivery method. That is the only way that prices will come down and be affordable for patients to receive this life-changing medication while at the same time providing a level of transparency that we do not have currently with the products being offered to patients. I hope to be able to attend the zoom meeting.

MK

I am writing to support a decision to add the proposed qualifying conditions for medical cannabis (i.e., anxiety, sickle cell disease, and tic disorder conditions). I was recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at the very same time the COVID-19 pandemic led to closures of business and educational institutions (in March 2020). I have been using medical cannabis since my diagnosis and it has significantly improved my overall medical condition. Medical cannabis has also reduced my anxiety, which has been exacerbated by the pandemic (like for so many other people). When using medical cannabis, my sleep has also improved drastically--I no longer experience debilitating insomnia.

I believe a lot of people who experience anxiety will benefit from the opportunity to qualify for medical cannabis. Thank you for your consideration.

KS