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GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

June 1, 2012

GOV. MALLOY SIGNS LEGISLATION PROVIDING RELIEF TO SOME PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC, DEBILITATING MEDICAL CONDITIONS

New Law Has Safeguards to Carefully Regulate its Use

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy has signed into law legislation that allows licensed physicians to certify an adult patient's use of medicinal marijuana after determining that the patient has a specified debilitating disease or medical condition and could benefit from its regulated treatment. The new law puts in place a number of safeguards designed to prevent potential abuse and carefully control its handling.

"For years, we've heard from so many patients with chronic diseases who undergo treatments like chemotherapy or radiation and are denied the palliative benefits that medical marijuana would provide," Governor Malloy said. "With careful regulation and safeguards, this law will allow a doctor and a patient to decide what is in that patient's best interest."

Under the law, patients with a debilitating condition must receive written certification from a physician and register with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP). Qualifying patients and their primary caregivers can possess a combined one-month supply, the amount of which will be determined by a board consisting of eight physicians certified by appropriate medical boards and enforced through DCP regulations.

Some of the conditions that qualify as debilitating include cancer, glaucoma, AIDS or HIV, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, damage to the nervous tissue of the spinal cord with objective neurological indication of intractable spasticity, epilepsy, cachexia (emaciation often caused by cancer or cardiac diseases), wasting syndrome, Crohn's disease, posttraumatic stress disorder, and other medical conditions, treatments and diseases.

Patients may obtain marijuana from certified pharmacists at licensed dispensaries, who will obtain it from licensed producers. The law allows for the licensing of at least three, but no more than ten, producers statewide.

"We don't want Connecticut to follow the path pursued by some other states, which essentially would legalize marijuana for anyone willing to find the right doctor and get the right prescription," Governor Malloy said. "In my opinion, such efforts run counter to federal law. Under this law, however, the Department of Consumer Protection will be able to carefully regulate and monitor the medicinal use of this drug in order to avoid the problems encountered in some other states."

Governor Malloy highlighted a number of safeguards written into the law to prevent potential abuse:

- Unlike California and several other states, patients must have both a physician's recommendation and a registration form from the Department of Consumer Protection, which is shared with law enforcement.
- Medical marijuana cannot be used in any public place, near children under the age of 18, in buses or other motor vehicles, on school grounds, nor in college dormitories.
- A panel of doctors selected by the Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection will determine how much marijuana may be possessed by patients, depending on the type of illness involved.
- Medical marijuana can only be sold legally by registered pharmacists who have been approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection, and those pharmacists can only sell marijuana that is produced by special licensed growers. Approved marijuana will be packaged in the same way as prescription drugs according to dosage.
- Doctors recommending marijuana will be carefully monitored through the existing Prescription Monitoring Program in order to identify those who demonstrate a pattern of excessive recommendation of medical marijuana.

21a-253), which allowed a doctor to prescribe the substance to relieve nausea associated with chemotherapy and the treatment of glaucoma. This new legislation modifies the existing law to make it more workable and ensure that the necessary patients are benefiting from its treatment.

The Governor specifically thanked Senate Majority Leader Martin Looney (D-New Haven, Hamden), State Senator Eric Coleman (D-Bloomfield), State Representative Gerald Fox, III (D-Stamford), and State Representative Penny Bacchiochi (R-Somers, Stafford, Union) for their leadership in passing the bill.

The legislation is Public Act 12-55, *An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana*.

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