Policy Protecting Patients Signed by California AG, Governor, CHP

California’s medical marijuana patients are now protected from arrest and seizure of their marijuana, thanks to a binding agreement between ASA and state officials.

The signed agreement settles a lawsuit filed last February against the California Highway Patrol by ASA on behalf of qualified medical cannabis patients who had lost their medicine in CHP traffic stops. CHP had a policy of seizing any cannabis found, regardless of whether the officer was shown patient documentation or not.

On August 22, 2005, as a result of the lawsuit, CHP adopted a new policy that respects the rights of qualified patients to possess and transport medical cannabis. The new settlement agreement - signed by CHP officials and counsel for Attorney General Bill Lockyer and Governor Schwarzenegger - makes binding the policy adopted last year. Qualified patients, whether they have a state ID card or not, are allowed to have either the quantities specified by SB420 or the local county guideline amounts, whichever is greater.

"We’re urging local officials around the state to adopt similar law enforcement policies," said Kris Hermes, ASA legal campaign director. "Medical cannabis patients have rights under the law that must be respected, and this consent decree acknowledges that."

As part of the settlement, ASA received reimbursement for legal fees associated with prosecuting the case.

"California's private attorney general statute encourages concerned citizens to fix flawed policy through litigation," said Joe Elford, ASA chief counsel. "This case corrects an egregious policy that completely ignored the right of sick and dying Californians to possess marijuana for medical use."

For more information or to read the policy and decree, see the ASA website.

ASA Activists Arrested at DEA Protest in San Diego

Medical marijuana patients and ASA activists demanding to speak with the head of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration were arrested in San Diego shortly after noon today for refusing to leave the site of an agency convention. The seven patients arrested and one cited were among the 75 patients and activists protesting at the Marriott San Diego Mission Valley, where the DEA held a meeting to discuss medical marijuana.

The protestors dumped 1,500 empty pill bottles in front of the hotel, asking that DEA chief Karen Tandy tell them where they should get their medicine, now that the agency has shut down all medical cannabis dispensaries in the area. The patients refused to leave until Tandy spoke with them. When she declined, San Diego police arrested the seven for trespassing and cited one.

"Doctors recommend cannabis and" (continued, p2)

Senator Jeffords Putting Pressure on HHS over Rescheduling Delay

Thanks in part to the efforts of ASA’s national office staff in Washington, D.C. and in a sign of the increasing pressure Congress is putting on the federal Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies to recognize medicinal uses of cannabis, a ranking Senator has taken action on behalf of patients.

Senator Jim Jeffords of Vermont on October 10 sent a formal letter to the head of DHHS, Secretary Michael Leavitt, asking about the status of the cannabis rescheduling petition that has been before the agency since 2004.

Senator Jeffords points out in the letter that he asked Secretary Leavitt about the issue at Leavitt’s confirmation hearing in January 2005, and was then told that it should be answered by August 2005. As Jeffords writes "Needless to say August 2005 has long since passed, and it has now been over two years since the DEA forwarded the rescheduling petition to the DHHS for evaluation, and yet no" (continued, p2)
Among the dozens of peer-reviewed medical and scientific articles about cannabis published this month are ones describing its neuroprotective and cancer-fighting properties, as well as how cannabis helps MS patients.

Incontinence control for patients with multiple sclerosis was the subject of a clinical trial in England, which showed that MS sufferers are significantly helped by cannabis. British researchers conducted a randomized, placebo-controlled study of 630 MS patients, comparing the efficacy of a cannabis extract to THC. The study found that both the extract and THC showed significant effects compared to placebo.

Scientists in China reported on a study of cannabinoids and cancer. Their study of patients with human hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) found that “disease-free survival was significantly better” in HCC patients that had more CB1 and CB2 cannabinoid receptors. They conclude that CB1 and CB2 may predict how patients with HCC will fare and suggest possible “beneficial effects of cannabinoids” for patients with HCC.

The tumor-fighting properties of cannabinoids was the subject of an article published by researchers in Sweden who are looking at mantle cell lymphoma (MCL). The Swedish team has already shown that cannabinoids induce growth inhibition and apoptosis in MCL. This study explores the roles of CB1 and CB2 receptors in making that happen. They conclude that targeting CB(1)/CB(2) may have therapeutic potential for this type of cancer.

Scientists in Great Britain published research on how certain cannabinoids can activate a type of receptors in the human body known as PPARs (peroxisome-proliferator-activated receptors), research they say identifies a new target for neuroprotective cannabis therapies.

In a neurological study conducted by researchers in Scotland, scientists looked at how THC interacts with the cannabinoid CBD, which has already been shown to act on both hippocampal neurones and glia to improve function. They found that THC and CBD interact synergistically, and conclude that other cannabis constituents can significantly modulate the ability of THC and CBD to improve neural activity.

(DeA Protest, continued)

patients use it because it works," said Steph Sherer, ASA executive director. "The DEA is inflicting unnecessary suffering on tens of thousands of Americans by denying them a safe, effective medicine. It has to stop."

Earlier in the day, two other patients were cited for dropping a banner near the hotel that read "The DEA is Not My Doctor."

The seven arrested were: Ira Altsheuler, Wendy Christakes, Alex Franco, Chris Fusco, Kris Hermes, Gail Tripp, and Kristen White. The one protester cited was Craig McCain, a spinal-injury patient in a wheelchair.

Patients in San Diego are having difficulty with access to medical cannabis since the DEA raided or threatened all the dispensaries in the area.

Similar raids in the past month have also shut medical cannabis dispensaries in Los Angeles, Modesto, Palm Springs and San Francisco.

Action has been taken on the DEA’s request."

Senator Jeffords goes on to ask Secretary Leavitt to "please describe the factors that have led to this delay in responding to the DEA's request," and asks for a new estimate on when the scientific and medical evaluation will be complete.

ASA’s Director of Government Affairs, Caren Woodson, continues to work with Senator Jeffords’ office and other Congressional offices to keep pressure on DHHS and other federal agencies to acknowledge that cannabis has therapeutic uses.

(Da Protest, continued)

research they say identifies a new target for neuroprotective cannabis therapies.

Scientists in Great Britain published research on how certain cannabinoids can activate a type of receptors in the human body known as PPARs (peroxisome-proliferator-activated receptors), research they say identifies a new target for neuroprotective cannabis therapies.

In a neurological study conducted by researchers in Scotland, scientists looked at how THC interacts with the cannabinoid CBD, which has already been shown to act on both hippocampal neurones and glia to improve function. They found that THC and CBD interact synergistically, and conclude that other cannabis constituents can significantly modulate the ability of THC and CBD to improve neural activity.

Among the dozens of peer-reviewed medical and scientific articles about cannabis published this month are ones describing its neuroprotective and cancer-fighting properties, as well as how cannabis helps MS patients.

Incontinence control for patients with multiple sclerosis was the subject of a clinical trial in England, which showed that MS sufferers are significantly helped by cannabis. British researchers conducted a randomized, placebo-controlled study of 630 MS patients, comparing the efficacy of a cannabis extract to THC. The study found that both the extract and THC showed significant effects compared to placebo.

Scientists in China reported on a study of cannabinoids and cancer. Their study of patients with human hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) found that “disease-free survival was significantly better” in HCC patients that had more CB1 and CB2 cannabinoid receptors. They conclude that CB1 and CB2 may predict how patients with HCC will fare and suggest possible “beneficial effects of cannabinoids” for patients with HCC.

The tumor-fighting properties of cannabinoids was the subject of an article published by researchers in Sweden who are looking at mantle cell lymphoma (MCL). The Swedish team has already shown that cannabinoids induce growth inhibition and apoptosis in MCL. This study explores the roles of CB1 and CB2 receptors in making that happen. They conclude that targeting CB(1)/CB(2) may have therapeutic potential for this type of cancer.

Scientists in Great Britain published research on how certain cannabinoids can activate a type of receptors in the human body known as PPARs (peroxisome-proliferator-activated receptors), research they say identifies a new target for neuroprotective cannabis therapies.

In a neurological study conducted by researchers in Scotland, scientists looked at how THC interacts with the cannabinoid CBD, which has already been shown to act on both hippocampal neurones and glia to improve function. They found that THC and CBD interact synergistically, and conclude that other cannabis constituents can significantly modulate the ability of THC and CBD to improve neural activity.

(DeA Protest, continued)

patients use it because it works," said Steph Sherer, ASA executive director. "The DEA is inflicting unnecessary suffering on tens of thousands of Americans by denying them a safe, effective medicine. It has to stop."

Earlier in the day, two other patients were cited for dropping a banner near the hotel that read "The DEA is Not My Doctor."

The seven arrested were: Ira Altsheuler, Wendy Christakes, Alex Franco, Chris Fusco, Kris Hermes, Gail Tripp, and Kristen White. The one protester cited was Craig McCain, a spinal-injury patient in a wheelchair.

Patients in San Diego are having difficulty with access to medical cannabis since the DEA raided or threatened all the dispensaries in the area.

Similar raids in the past month have also shut medical cannabis dispensaries in Los Angeles, Modesto, Palm Springs and San Francisco.

Action has been taken on the DEA’s request."

Senator Jeffords goes on to ask Secretary Leavitt to "please describe the factors that have led to this delay in responding to the DEA's request," and asks for a new estimate on when the scientific and medical evaluation will be complete.

ASA’s Director of Government Affairs, Caren Woodson, continues to work with Senator Jeffords’ office and other Congressional offices to keep pressure on DHHS and other federal agencies to acknowledge that cannabis has therapeutic uses.

(Da Protest, continued)

research they say identifies a new target for neuroprotective cannabis therapies.

Scientists in Great Britain published research on how certain cannabinoids can activate a type of receptors in the human body known as PPARs (peroxisome-proliferator-activated receptors), research they say identifies a new target for neuroprotective cannabis therapies.

In a neurological study conducted by researchers in Scotland, scientists looked at how THC interacts with the cannabinoid CBD, which has already been shown to act on both hippocampal neurones and glia to improve function. They found that THC and CBD interact synergistically, and conclude that other cannabis constituents can significantly modulate the ability of THC and CBD to improve neural activity.