



ASA Weighs in on Utah's Medical Compromise Bill



Americans for Safe Access last month released its analysis of a Utah medical cannabis bill being touted as a compromise. The new measure scored marginally worse than the initiative it is ostensibly designed to fix. Utah Gov. Gary Herbert has said he will call a special session of the state legislature to address the issue.

On October 4, Utah legislators released draft text of legislation known as the Utah Medical Cannabis Compromise Bill. This bill was drafted in response to Proposition 2, a citizen-led initiative that would legalize the medicinal use of cannabis in Utah. ASA scored Prop 2 when the initiative was certified, giving it a score of

61.80% (309.02 out of 500 points) The Medical Cannabis Compromise Bill received a score of 57.87% (286.83 out of 500 points).

Scoring is based on the rubric used in ASA's annual report, "Medical Marijuana Access in the United States." ASA grades state medical cannabis programs in five categories: (1) Patient Rights and Civil Protections from Discrimination, (2) Access to Medicine, (3) Ease of Navigation, (4) Functionality and (5) Consumer Safety and Provider Requirements.

Unlike Proposition 2, the compromise bill requires distribution of medical cannabis through a central state pharmacy that would

ship to local health departments for pick up by registered patients. The proposed bill would only single-dose oral or transdermal products, and access to extracted oils or dried cannabis flower would be prohibited except for patients who have "failed to substantially respond" to at least two of the allowed product types.

On the plus side, the compromise bill provides for stronger patient rights protections than Proposition 2 would if enacted, including protecting employees from discrimination for their use of medical cannabis.

Like many other states, Utah voters will have the opportunity to decide the future of their medical cannabis program on November 6.

ASA Keynote in Guam as Part of Global Month

Co-Founder and Executive Director of ASA Steph Sherer is in Guam this month to deliver one of the keynote addresses at "Cultivating Change," the third medical cannabis workshop sponsored by Grassroots Guam. The other keynote is Nic Easley, CEO of 3C Consulting, who was profiled in the August newsletter.



Sherer travels the globe to assist governments in providing patients with the regulations to have a successful medical cannabis industry.

Last month, Sherer traveled to South Africa, Czech Republic and Hong Kong. In South Africa, she met with world leaders to address how best to serve medical cannabis patients in their countries. In Hong Kong, she participated in the first Cannabis Investor Symposium, where leading cannabis business leaders and investment experts from around the world gathered to discuss the burgeoning industry.

The Guam meeting was called to address delays and barriers to implementation of the 2014 KC Concepcion Compassionate Use Act, which established Guam's medical cannabis program. Sessions focused on regulatory and industry issues, as well as resources for patients.

"Having worked closely with Americans For Safe Access in the past, I know what they can do to assist stalled programs and get the necessary resources to regulators," said Nic Easley. "Steph established the Patient Focused Certification program for exactly this purpose. Everyone can hear for themselves that this years-long delay is not insurmountable."

Mexico's Supreme Court Legalizes Cannabis Use



Personal use and cultivation of cannabis is now legal in Mexico, following a series of court rulings. On October 31, Mexico's Supreme Court issued a pair of rulings that found the country's ban on consuming cannabis to be unconstitutional.

Those rulings are the latest in a series of decisions on safe access to cannabis and make it binding on all Mexican courts and jurisdictions. In Mexico, rulings become binding precedent when the Supreme Court rules the same way

on a matter five times. The first ruling that allowed a group to grow cannabis came in November 2015.

The high court's ruling obligates the Mexican legislature to amend any laws that are in conflict. The incoming administration of Andrés Manuel López Obrador was already openly considering legalization. Future cabinet members of the new administration recently traveled to Canada to meet with government officials about how they have implemented a legal framework for adult use.

Cannabis Industry Standards Go Global

The cannabis industry will benefit from a new partnership between researchers and a global standards organization that will produce guidance for everything from cannabis cultivation to cosmetics.

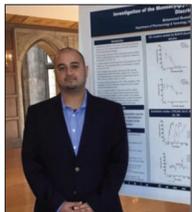
The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and the International Cannabis and Cannabinoids Institute (ICCI) announced the Memorandum of Understanding late last month. ICCI, located in the Czech Republic, is the first European partner for ASTM International's cannabis committee, which has grown to more than 500 members worldwide in its first two years. The cannabis committee (designated D37 by ASTM), which includes businesses, laboratories, associations, governments, and others, was formally organized two years ago after industry requests.



ICCI was co-founded by ASA to help remove barriers to access for patients globally by bringing together the current knowledge base for cannabis research. In 2016, ASA signed a licensing agreement with ICCI to offer its Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program globally.

The organizations are prioritizing a cannabis cultivation standard, followed by standards related to cannabis cosmetics, as well as food supplements and extracts. ICCI's involvement strengthens the committee's collaborative efforts in medicinal and laboratory-related cannabis standards.

Activist Profile: Mohammed Mustafa, Virginia



Activism takes many forms and finds many inspirations. For Mohammed Mustafa, interest in medical cannabis came from realizing a close family member who died from cancer could have eased

the devastating effects of chemotherapy with cannabis, if it had been available. But treatment was in a D.C.-area hospital in the days before safe access.

"When I discovered how cannabis can help with chemotherapy, I was determined to help other families with access," Mohammed says.

His academic background had always been science, mostly biology and psychology. As his interest in medical cannabis grew, he made study of the endocannabinoid system (ECS) the focus of a project while getting an Associate's degree, then went on to a Bachelors. He is now enrolled in graduate school pursuing a Master's degree and research on the ECS.

Mohammed got involved with advocacy in 2012 when he attended an ASA chapter meeting in San Francisco during a trip there and discovered there was a chapter in D.C., too. On his return to the D.C. area, he connected with the chapter and went to work on implementing the medical cannabis program the District Council had enacted in 2010. Together with other advocates, he helped expand the limited qualifying conditions and make it easier to obtain a doctor's recommendation. When he started, D.C. had no recommendation forms

for physicians, but lobbying the council made the difference.

After that, Mohammed moved to Richmond, Virginia and helped found ASA's Safe Access Virginia chapter (pictured right at an early organizing meeting in 2013). They began lobbying Virginia's General Assembly to defeat a bad bill that would have blocked safe access



and got it tabled. The next year, they were back with patients and the families of children with seizure disorders and got an affirmative epilepsy law passed. In the past three years, he's helped add regulated cultivation to the law and expand conditions.

As a pharmacologist in a behavioral lab working on cannabinoids, Mohammed sees his role as making sure advocates have talking points backed by science when they're educating policy makers on how cannabis can treat pain, anxiety, and other conditions. He has presented at local and international cannabinoid science conferences and co-authored several peer-reviewed publications with prominent scientists such as Raphael Mechoulam.

"The medical cannabis industry is moving so much faster than science," Mohammed says. "I want to bridge the gap by helping develop consistent cannabinoid medicines that are appropriate and address side effects."

Free ASA Webinar on Method Validation 11/7



On Wednesday, Nov. 7, at 5pm EST, join PFC Director Heather Despres for a free live webinar, "Method Validation – Not Just for Labs!" This webinar will review what method validation is, how method validation can be achieved, and how method validation is necessary for many different types of operations. We'll also review how validation fits into a well-rounded quality system and discuss strategies for validating various processes. RSVP at www.safeaccessnow.org/method_validation_webinar.

Webinar on Medicalization and the Patient Experience Now on YouTube

Check out ASA's YouTube channel to watch last month's free webinar with Michelle Newhart, PhD and William Dolphin discussing their new book, *The Medicalization of Marijuana*. Learn what their research reveals about what it means to participate in a state medical cannabis program and how patients create legitimacy and combat stigma. View it online at www.safeaccessnow.org/asa_live.

PFC Adds Trish Flaster as Global Board Chair



ASA's Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program this month welcomed a new Global Board Chair, Trish Flaster, M.Sci. In this role, Flaster will help PFC develop a global review board for industry standards, including pre-assessments and assessments, and support PFC ISO certification. Skilled in botanical and chemical experience, she has consulted in the cannabis industry on testing, supply chain, quality and research. Prior to that, Flaster was a botanist for Celestial Seasonings developing new ingredient sourcing and quality-control analytical test procedures.



PFC Director Named to ICCI Scientific Board



Heather Despres, M.Sci., Director of the Patient Focused Certification (PFC) program, was named this month to the Scientific Board of the

International Cannabis and Cannabinoid Institute (ICCI). Despres will serve as ASA's representative to ICCI. ICCI was co-founded by ASA to help remove barriers to access for patients globally by bringing together research in biomedicine, life sciences, and public policy to create a platform for sharing, exploration, and education. In 2016, ASA signed a licensing agreement with ICCI to offer its PFC program around the globe. The PFC program was developed to address product safety and quality standards for the medical cannabis industry.



ACTION ALERT: Register and Vote Medical Marijuana!

The political change the November 6 elections will bring are an opportunity for patients and advocates to be heard. Dozens of new members of Congress will have a chance to reform federal policies, so make sure you're registered to vote and then choose carefully. Go to VoteMedicalMarijuana.com to find out where your candidates stand on medical cannabis issues. Share the information with friends and family, and make sure they're registered and voting, too. Every vote makes a difference, particularly when you Vote Medical Marijuana! Get the resources today at VoteMedicalMarijuana.com.



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