



## HB 1535

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House Bill 1535 would remove the terminal qualifier for cancer, allowing access to the Compassionate Use Program for all cancer patients. The bill also adds chronic pain and PTSD (for veterans only) while empowering the Department of State Health Services to add new qualifying conditions through their administrative rule-making process. HB 1535 would also raise the cap on THC to 5% and create "Institutional Review Boards," which will facilitate research and track the impact of medical cannabis on patients participating in the program.

These are important improvements to the Texas Compassionate Use Program. We would like to offer our recommendations on how the program can further be improved.

- **Allow Doctors to practice medicine** by authorizing them to determine the optimal strength and dosage for each individual patient's medical needs. This means there should be no list of qualifying conditions/symptoms nor any THC cap, both of which restrict a doctor's ability to properly treat their patients.
- **Move from percentage based dosing to weight based dosing** like other prescription medicines. Doctors should be able to recommend how many milligrams of THC, CBD, or other cannabinoids a patient needs rather than using a complicated formula to determine weight from the percentage restriction.
- **Protect doctors from federal interference** by allowing them to "recommend" (not "prescribe") low-THC cannabis, which is still a Schedule I controlled substance. This is how all 36 states with effective medical cannabis laws operate.
- **Establish patient protections** to eliminate the threat of arrest, prosecution, or penalty in any manner. These protections cover any denial of right or privilege, civil penalty, or disciplinary action, by a court or occupational licensing entity. Parental rights should never be denied, and students cannot be subject to any form of discipline solely because of possession or use of their legal medicine.
- **Authorize independent, third-party testing** by certified labs for consumer protection and industry accountability. Currently, no independent lab can test medicine dispensed under the Compassionate Use Program.

Thank you for considering this important medical issue!