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I am a recently retired psychiatrist who has worked for over 30 years providing treatment and consultation on mentally ill, drug addicted and incarcerated patients at places such as Lane County and Marion County Mental Health, Lane County Jail, Serenity Lane, Looking Glass and many others over the years. I have probably had 25000 patient visits at Lane County Jail alone.

Without the OMMP 10's of thousands of Oregonians of all ages and political persuasions would be at a real risk of prosecution, confiscation, incarceration, forced drug treatment and family fragmentation as they attempted to manage their medical conditions with a generally safe and well tolerated treatment approach.

I believe that there are additional symptoms and conditions that appear to show response and relief in a unique fashion from the use of Cannabis but have not yet been approved. As we know, people who use it for treatment of unapproved conditions and cannot otherwise qualify for OMMP, risk arrest and/or forced drug abuse treatment as they endeavor to obtain this medication for themselves or their loved ones. This is an expensive and cruel outcome.

Over the years, working with patients in jail, at Mental Health clinics, in drug treatment facilities and in private practice, I have learned that the sleep disturbances, behavioral reactivity, impulsiveness and sometimes a tendency towards violence that can be associated with PTSD, is often successfully and best managed with cannabis. Convincing and repeated reports from patients and verified by their families have convinced me that when using cannabis, certain individuals who are otherwise susceptible to losing behavioral or emotional control can live a productive life, or at the very least can be reasonably and safely managed at home. I would like to see cannabis approved for this use.

What I've witnessed is that if cannabis becomes unavailable to these people, instability and sometimes misbehavior is a common consequence. This can result in incarceration and that's when I often see them as the jail psychiatrist. As I have worked with patients both in and out of jail, I've discovered that for a large number of those with PTSD it is not atypical to find that cannabis is a safer, better tolerated and more effective treatment than available medications for this particular PTSD associated symptom complex.

The rational, clinically defensible and compassionate treatment approach, which would also provide some budgetary relief to counties as well as the health care system, is to allow patients to benefit from cannabis treatment for symptom management. Unfortunately this has been blocked by political realities and the criticisms of those who are perhaps competing for limited public resources. This includes law enforcement, the fast growing private correctional industry and professional groups paid to service those mandated to accept drug treatment. The OMMP has been remarkably successful on a variety of levels and I'd like to see its services extended to additional patients who would clearly benefit from the program's assistance and protection.

Respectfully submitted,

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References related to use of Cannabis by those with PTSD found in:

“Mitigation of post-traumatic stress symptoms by Cannabis resin: A review of the clinical and neurobiological evidence” by Passie, Emrich, Karst, Brandt and Halpern ([www.drugtestinganalysis.com](http://www.drugtestinganalysis.com)) DOI 10.1002/dta.1377

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