



The Massachusetts Chapter

Testimony of the Massachusetts Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics Re: Proposed Regulations Implementing the Use of Medical Marijuana 105 CMR 725.000

April 19, 2013

On behalf of the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MCAAP), I would like to thank the Department of Public Health for its exemplary efforts toward protecting children while developing the newly proposed regulations on the use of medical marijuana (105 CMR 725.00). By recognizing the differential effects of marijuana on children, and crafting regulations accordingly, we are optimistic that medical marijuana can be made available to all adults who might benefit without exposing the children whom it will most certainly harm. We therefore commend the Department for distinguishing “qualifying patients under the age of 18,” and banning the prescribing of medical marijuana to anyone under 18, except for a debilitating life-limiting illness. The MCAAP strongly supports the proposed regulations.

As matters of clarification and enhancement, we would offer the following points for consideration as you finalize the regulations around use in qualifying patients under age 18:

1. Given the potential for harm, permission of all custodial parents should be required for use of medical marijuana in children.
2. Since use under age 18 is intended only for “life limiting conditions”, certification and registration periods for children should be shortened accordingly.
3. Because marijuana is rarely used in pediatrics, physicians seeking to certify qualifying patients under 18 should receive specific education concerning its effects on the developing brain. In this, the MCAAP would be pleased to partner with the Department in designing a suitable curriculum.

Again, the over 1,800 physicians of MCAAP very much appreciate the Department’s clear commitment to children. We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the development of these important regulations and look forward to working with you in the future to ensure the health of children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John O'Reilly".

John O'Reilly
President

The Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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