

Arizona NORML Lobby Week Cue Sheet

Hello Cannabis Ambassadors!

Each lobby week meeting will be structured to allow you as a constituent to talk briefly about how marijuana has benefitted you or improved the lives of your friends, relative and loved ones. These personal testimonies are incredibly powerful for our lawmakers to hear from their constituents. They also serve to destigmatize the misconceptions that many lawmakers still have regarding cannabis consumers.

After each constituent has had the opportunity to discuss their personal stories, we'll move on to talk briefly about the bills in this session that we either support or oppose. Since each meeting will generally only last 15 minutes (some might go to a ½ hour), we will only have time to briefly discuss four bills as well as promote the idea of universal and automatic expungements. Those bills are (each number has a hyperlink to the full text of the bill).

[SB1402](#): This bill is sponsored by Sen. Gowan (R-LD14) and simply allows rural dispensaries that were awarded a backfill adult-use license to become dual-licensed as both adult-use establishments and medical dispensaries. This will allow patients in rural areas to have better access to medicine and enhance competition by adding more medical dispensaries. From a consumer and patient perspective, this is an excellent idea that we fully support. This bill passed the Senate HHS committee on February 2 with a 6-2 vote.

[HB2802](#): This bill is sponsored by Rep. Osborne (R-LD13) and is rather similar to a bill she sponsored last year that we had to kill. We have several concerns with this bill. We don't like the language that states that dispensaries are prohibited from selling marijuana or marijuana products to people who are obviously intoxicated. We'd like to see a carve out for medical patients whose conditions might lead them to appear intoxicated. We certainly don't want to see any patient denied their medicine over this clause. We also don't agree with the bill only allowing the sponsorship of events that are attended by those 21 years-old and older. This type of restriction certainly doesn't apply to events with alcohol sponsorship so we don't feel that marijuana sponsorship should be any different. We also object to the language that no advertising can happen within one mile of a school. We have been informed that this will actually hurt existing cannabis businesses such as Cannapages. This clause is also incredibly vague as to what type of advertising is prohibited. This ambiguity could lead to unintended consequences relative to advertising. Lastly, we don't like the fact that the bill only allows for marijuana businesses to host events for members of the industry. We believe that all events should be open to members of the industry as well as cannabis consumers and the general public. We spoke against this bill in the Health and Human Services Committee last Monday but it passed 6-3 and passed the Rules Committee 5-3 on January 31st. We simply cannot support this bill in its current form and will lobby against it next week.

[HB2260](#): This bill is very similar to the Autism bill from last year and is again sponsored by Rep. Espinoza (D-LD19) and co-sponsored by Rep. Dalessandro (D-LD02). The bill adds any debilitating condition of Autism Spectrum Disorder including agitation, rage attacks or self-injurious behavior as well as PTSD for veterans to the list of qualifying conditions to the medical marijuana program. We fully support the addition of Autism Spectrum Disorder and PTSD for veterans to the list of qualifying conditions. However, there is language at the end of this bill relative to physicians recommending the potency, frequency and quantity of marijuana use for patients under 18 years of age that we cannot support. Furthermore, this language puts an unreasonable burden on parents in that a physician must assess a qualified patient on a monthly basis until it is determined that the patient is taking a stable dose. We are working closely with MAMMA (Mothers Advocating for Medical Marijuana for Autism) on this bill. Because of the aforementioned language, we remain neutral on this bill until we can get that language removed or amended. This bill has not been assigned to committee yet.

Here are a few bullet points in support of adding Autism Spectrum Disorder to the list of qualifying conditions:

- In myriad jurisdictions where medical cannabis is permitted for autism, parents and physicians are reporting positive results.
- Decisions regarding medical treatment options related to Autism Spectrum Disorder are best made by doctors, not politicians.
- Provisions that require monthly doctor visits (such as the language above) create an unnecessary burden on patients and their parents due to costs associated with frequent traveling and doctor's visits. This could also create a barrier for patients in need and disproportionately affect those on a low or fixed income.

Here are some links from national NORML relative to Autism Spectrum Disorder and marijuana:

<https://norml.org/news/2020/08/27/review-cannabinoids-promising-for-treating-symptoms-of-autism-spectrum-disorder/>

<https://norml.org/news/2019/12/05/study-daily-use-of-cbd-extracts-mitigates-symptoms-in-patients-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-2/>

<https://norml.org/news/2019/02/07/study-oral-cbd-administration-associated-with-symptom-mitigation-in-children-with-autism-spectrum-disorder/>

<https://norml.org/news/2021/01/28/case-report-cannabis-extract-associated-with-improvement-in-autism-related-behavioral-symptoms/>

<https://norml.org/news/2019/04/11/colorado-governor-signs-legislation-permitting-medical-cannabis-for-autism/>

<https://norml.org/news/2019/02/21/study-children-with-autism-possess-decreased-endocannabinoid-levels/>

[HB2007](#): This bill was introduced by Rep. Rodriguez (D-LD27) but he has since resigned his position in the legislature to run for state attorney general. This bill was sponsored by Kirsten Engel last year but never made it into committee. HB2007 allows for school administrators to refer students with drug free school zone violations to attend an alternate program for at-risk students as opposed to reporting them to law enforcement. There is good intention behind this bill in attempting to keep students from being referred to law enforcement regarding drug violations. We support this bill but it has not been assigned to committee yet.

If you have any personal anecdotes that might support these bills or want to add anything else, please feel free to do so. Just ensure that what you discuss is factual and valid.

It's also a good idea to read a bit about your representatives. That way, you can mention something about them or about a bill they sponsored that will help you to develop some quick rapport.

Here's the link to the website for the Arizona legislature that has member rosters for biographies (if the bio is incomplete, a quick google search will help you to find information):

<https://azleg.gov>

We have also attached a word document of our General Election Candidate Guide for 2020 where we rated everyone running for the house and senate. If you are meeting with a strongly-rated candidate, I would mention the rating and thank them for their support. If you are meeting with a poorly-rated candidate, I wouldn't say anything but just be aware that they might not necessarily agree with our positions. We'll also celebrate A rated candidates in our introductions.

We are incredibly excited for you to join us for our lobby week next week and look forward to working with you!

Remember that we will have leadership in each of these meetings so you won't be alone and you will have our full support!

We'll be hosting two trainings over the weekend. One is on Saturday at 10:00 AM and the other is on Sunday at 2:00 PM. We will also be opening up the Zoom room one hour prior to our first meeting of each day to strategize and get fired up for a big day of lobbying.

Lastly, keep in mind that we are serving as cannabis ambassadors for our community as well as representing both Arizona NORML and Southern Arizona NORML as organizations. Our professional behavior in these meetings will greatly contribute to our outreach and our efforts to end the negative stigma surrounding cannabis consumers!

We truly value and appreciate each of you and your willingness to have your voice heard at the capitol next week!

Please let us know if you have any questions and here's to an incredibly fun and exciting virtual lobby week!!!

In Solidarity,

Mike