

September 21, 2017

The Honorable Brian Schatz
United States Senate
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

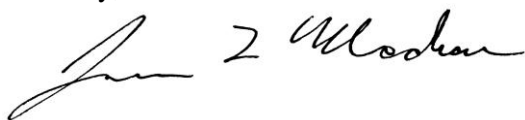
Dear Senator Schatz:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for S. 1803, the “Marijuana Effective Drug Studies (MEDS) Act of 2017.” Current federal law imposes significant barriers to legitimate research evaluating the potential efficacy and safety of medicines derived from cannabis. This legislation would help to ease these barriers by encouraging valid scientific and clinical research, expanding sources of research-grade cannabis, and facilitating the commercial production of FDA-approved cannabinoid-based drugs.

The AMA supports adequate and well-controlled studies of cannabis and phytocannabinoids in patients who have serious conditions for which preclinical, anecdotal, or controlled evidence suggests possible efficacy and the application of such results to the understanding and treatment of disease. We believe that the MEDS Act would enable more research by creating an improved, streamlined approval process by the federal U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and by allowing researchers to amend or supplement their approved research protocol without reapplying to the DEA for a new Schedule I research registration.

While the medical use of cannabis is now legal in 25 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam, scientific studies are still needed to determine how safe and effective pharmaceutical products derived from cannabis can be developed and used to treat specific diseases and conditions. The AMA applauds you for cosponsoring the MEDS Act, which we believe is an important step forward in facilitating such research.

Sincerely,



James L. Madara, MD