



Utah Medical Association Statement re: Prop #2 Lawsuit

The Utah Medical Association (UMA) is not involved in the lawsuit filed by Walter Plumb, III, regarding Proposition #2, The Utah Medical Cannabis Act. Although the Association is opposed to the proposition and advises Utah residents to vote No in November, UMA is not a party to the current lawsuit.

“The lawsuit was filed independently by Mr. Plumb. His reasons for doing so are his own. The Medical Association has not taken a position on the issues brought by the current lawsuit. We still, however, oppose the proposition,” said UMA President Elizabeth Howell, MD.

“UMA’s reasons for opposing the ballot initiative on marijuana have nothing to do with the arguments brought in the lawsuit, but rather, focus on provisions in the initiative that would foster use of a controlled substance in the guise of medical treatment.”

Other states which have passed medical marijuana laws, especially those that include the catch-all “chronic pain” as a qualifying illness, have seen tremendous increases in both adult and adolescent recreational use, and have experienced the expected increases in fatal auto accidents, emergency department visits, and other adverse consequences, which are especially significant when young users are involved which is allowed in the proposed initiative. The latest Utah Sharp survey shows that youth suicide attempts increase with marijuana use, from 1 in 14 who attempt suicide to 1 in 5 when marijuana is involved.

“Those who want to use marijuana products, especially those with a high THC content, for legitimate illnesses or conditions will be experimenting on themselves using a known addictive and psychoactive substance with few evidence-based studies to support its use. This is not evidence-based practice of medicine. We are concerned about potential harms and unintended consequences for our patients, their families, and the community at large,” said Dr. Howell.

UMA has consistently and repeatedly focused on the medical issues as reasons for opposing Proposition 2. The current lawsuit is not about those medical issues. UMA was not aware of the lawsuit until it was filed and is not a party to the suit.

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