

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 197

BY SENATOR MARTINY

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Centers at New Orleans and Shreveport, the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, and the Louisiana State University and Southern University Agricultural Centers to pursue opportunities for basic research, applied research, and clinical trials to evaluate the safety and clinical efficacy of marijuana for therapeutic use.

WHEREAS, Act No. 96 of the 2016 Regular Session of the legislature authorizes access to therapeutic marijuana for patients with specific debilitating conditions including cancer, human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, cachexia or wasting syndrome, seizure disorders, epilepsy, spasticity, Crohn's disease, muscular dystrophy, or multiple sclerosis; and

WHEREAS, the populations of patients who have these conditions are particularly vulnerable and include children, persons who are elderly, and others who are in great need of consumer protections and quality healthcare; and

WHEREAS, a pronounced and growing need exists for development of national standards for proper utilization, dosage levels, and other drug protocols for therapeutic marijuana; and

WHEREAS, the United States Food and Drug Administration, referred to hereafter as the "FDA", has indicated that scientifically valid investigations and well-controlled clinical trials which produce evidence-based research are necessary in order for the agency to determine the safety and efficacy of marijuana for medical treatment; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners communicated a similar position in this segment of a report concerning therapeutic marijuana that it issued to the legislative committees on health and welfare in January of 2016: "In order to insure the public health, safety, and welfare the board suggests that therapeutic marijuana. . . should be subject to the same evidence-based review and regulatory oversight as other medications prescribed by physicians. Indeed, only in this manner will the legislature, the board, physicians, and the public be in a position to evaluate the efficacy of its use in connection with a given disease or condition. To accomplish this task, it is necessary that the potentially therapeutic chemicals in marijuana must be purified and tested in randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trials"; and

WHEREAS, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration currently authorizes only one marijuana production facility in the nation, but has announced that it intends to expand the number of authorized entities it will register to grow and distribute marijuana for FDA-sanctioned research; and

WHEREAS, to date, the National Institutes of Health has awarded substantial grants of funding for research on marijuana and potential medicinal applications of that substance, and has indicated that it plans to continue funding such research efforts; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the growth in government-funded research on therapeutic marijuana, opportunities for privately-sponsored research on this subject may also become available.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Centers at New Orleans and Shreveport, the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, and the Louisiana State University and Southern University Agricultural Centers to pursue opportunities for basic research, applied research, and clinical trials to evaluate the safety and clinical efficacy of marijuana for therapeutic use.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each state agency, board, or commission which is involved in production, dispensing, or otherwise regulating marijuana for therapeutic use is hereby urged to collaborate in efforts to pursue research opportunities called for in this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans, the chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at Shreveport, the executive director of the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, the vice president for agriculture and dean of the College of Agriculture of Louisiana State University, and the chancellor-dean of the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE