

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

December 15, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write to urge you to maintain the protections included in both the House and Senate Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations bills to prevent the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) from prohibiting or penalizing physicians for recommending medical marijuana to any patient requesting its use in a state where such activities are legal.

Thirty-eight states, the District of Columbia, and four U.S. territories have passed laws that provide for legal access to medical marijuana products. As a result, more than three million patients across the country, including many veterans, now use medical marijuana at the recommendation of their physician to treat conditions ranging from seizures, glaucoma, anxiety, chronic pain, nausea, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Despite this growing state availability of medical marijuana, the VA prohibits its medical providers from completing forms brought by their patients seeking recommendations or opinions regarding participation in a state medical marijuana program. The House and Senate bills both included critical language to restrict the use of funds for this harmful prohibition on providers and veterans.

We therefore request that you maintain the following language in the FY 2024 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations bill (S. 2127, Sec. 260):

None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Veterans Affairs in this Act may be used in a manner that would—

- (1) interfere with the ability of a veteran to participate in a medicinal marijuana program approved by a State;*
- (2) deny any services from the Department to a veteran who is participating in such a program; or*
- (3) limit or interfere with the ability of a health care provider of the Department to make appropriate recommendations, fill out forms, or take steps to comply with such a program.*

Veterans should not be forced outside the VA system to seek a treatment that is legal in their state. VA physicians should not be denied the ability to offer a recommendation that they think may meet the needs of their patients.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Member of Congress