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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG


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HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
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OTHER APPOINTMENTS:
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members

FROM: Rep. Mark B. Cohen, Chair 
Human Services Committee

DATE: May 13, 2011

RE: Co-sponsorship of Medical Marijuana legislation

Your co-sponsorship is requested for legislation that would permit the use of medical marijuana by patients found by physicians that this would be appropriate.

This proposal would allow physicians to evaluate and allow a patient suffering from cancer, HIV/AIDS, glaucoma, and a painful wasting disease, who could not better benefit from other medication, to obtain an ID allowing the patient to obtain medicinal marijuana. The patient would make an application for the ID from a state registry. The ID would allow the patient to purchase a specified amount of medical marijuana from a state controlled or monitored center.

Medicinal marijuana can benefit patients suffering from several diseases. It often is more effective and is far safer than other medications now prescribed, such as oxycontin, morphine, and methadone. Medical marijuana also uniquely allows a person with glaucoma to improve sight.

OVER

It is far better that patients obtain medical marijuana from a safe source. The reality is many patients now purchase marijuana from an underground economy that often sells unsafe products and then pushes other stronger and more addictive drugs on customers.

The Commonwealth can benefit as this will be a new revenue source. In these financial crisis times, we can use these funds. This is a way to obtain more revenue while helping people. .

This bill is similar to HB 1383 which I proposed last year. There are some changes that have been made based upon ideas from a proposal in Delaware and model legislation by the Medical Marijuana Project. The new provisions will restrict the amount of marijuana medication in refills, limit compassion centers to one per 250,000 residents, and will protect patients from discrimination just for being patients.

Please contact Linda Huntington in my office at lhunting@pahouse.net or 787-3085 in order to co-sponsor this bill.