

TESTIMONY OF Danny Long  
BEFORE THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
ON HB 1393 COMPASSIONATE USE ACT OF 2009

Good morning, Chairmen Oliver and Baker, and Members of the Committee. My name is Danny Long. I am a 54 year old male from McAlisterville, and a lifelong resident of Pennsylvania.

I began my working career the day after high school graduation in 1972. In October of 1974 I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease, then in 1976 I was diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis - specifically Ankylosing Spondylitis.

Any medical professional can tell you that either of these diseases alone can be disabling. Despite the challenges of my illness, I continued to work. My career was in manufacturing engineering and I served in various roles of three (3) Pennsylvania manufacturing firms between 1974 and 2004. In 1994 my RA flared and I was debilitated to the point I had to resign and go on Social Security Disability. In 1997 I began what was then a new type of biological treatment for RA - specifically Remicade. The treatments were expensive but beneficial, and in 1997 I returned to work - initially part-time, and after several months, full time.

I continued working until 2004 when I was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Medical professionals can attest to the fact that Lymphoma is an unfortunate side effect of these biological medicines. Chemotherapy and radiation have once again debilitated me. The type of Lymphoma I have is not considered "curable", but it is treatable.

I have suffered so much. Maintaining a healthy weight for me is difficult, nearly impossible. I weigh less than 125 lbs. I cannot stand erect as I am severely "stooped" because my spine is permanently fused by the Rheumatoid Arthritis.

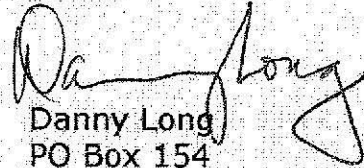
After my lymphoma treatments I took a 3 month vacation, over the winter months, in Hawaii, as kind of a last hurrah. Hawaii is a state that allows medical marijuana. Although I was not a resident I was able to obtain some (illicitly) and *enjoyed some of the most dramatic relief I have ever experienced since my original diagnosis.*

Upon my return home, I discussed this with my Rheumatologist, and he said that he would readily write a prescription if it were available in PA. We (the doctor and I) decided to try Marinol, a 100% THC pill form of the primary active ingredient of marijuana. The results were disappointing and certainly not equivalent to smoking marijuana.

I offer my testimony in sincerity and with hopes that the legislature will consider allowing the legal use of medical marijuana in Pennsylvania. Please support HB 1393, and vote YES. Thank you for this opportunity to be heard.

Dated: 11/24/2009

Sincerely,



Danny Long  
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