

To The Honorable Susan Donovan and Honorable Committee Members,

I respectfully submit my testimony in support of Ryan's Law, Rhode Island HB 5630, for consideration at the hearing on this bill in the House Health and Human Services Committee.

My name is Jill Simonian and have been a licensed pharmacist in San Diego, California for 35 years. I earned my Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), and completed a residency at UC San Diego Healthcare System. Over the course of my career, I spent more than 25 years at the San Diego Veterans Administration, serving in various roles, including inpatient care, ambulatory care, and medication safety. I also have experience in the retail pharmacy setting.

Currently, I serve as faculty at both UC San Diego and UC Irvine Schools of Pharmacy, where I teach a course on Cannabis Pharmacology and Therapeutics to pharmacy and medical students. I developed this course six years ago in response to the growing disconnect between the increasing legalization of cannabis at the state level and the limited education pharmacists receive on the therapeutic benefits and potential risks of cannabis.

In addition, I founded the Pharmacists' Cannabis Coalition of California (PCCC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing cannabis education and awareness among pharmacists and other healthcare professionals.

One key focus of our work has been Ryan's Law, a landmark piece of legislation in California's healthcare community. Due to federal restrictions and the absence of an FDA-approved botanical cannabis product, many healthcare facilities have been resistant to permitting patients to use their own cannabis for medical purposes. Ryan's Law changed that by requiring healthcare facilities in California to allow terminally ill patients to use their own medical cannabis, within certain guidelines. As a pharmacist, I fully support of this law, as it ensures that patients can continue their established medical cannabis therapy, rather than being forced to switch to an alternative medication, such as opioids.

Through PCCC, we have presented on Ryan's Law at the national, state, and local levels, offering guidance to healthcare facilities on how to implement the law effectively. We have also developed Policies and Procedures to support a smooth and compliant rollout.

Ryan's Law is a compassionate measure that ensures terminally ill patients can spend their final days with dignity and in comfort. Officially titled The Compassionate Access to

Medical Cannabis in Health Care Facilities Act, the law underscores the essential principle of compassion. I strongly support the expansion of Ryan's Law, HB 5630, to the state of Rhode Island.

Respectfully,

Jill Simonian, PharmD