

Chairman Donovan and Honorable Committee Members, my name is Jim Bartell.

I am the father of Ryan Bartell and sponsor of Ryan's Law; The Compassionate Access to Medical Cannabis in Health Care Facilities Act.

Ryan worked in special education with mostly autistic children. To do that job takes not only special skills, but also great patience and compassion. Ryan had those qualities and was very effective with his students.

On March 1st 2018, Ryan called me and my wife to tell us that he had been diagnosed with stage four pancreatic cancer and had only a few weeks to live. I couldn't believe what I was hearing and my heart sank and the tears swelled.

He was in the hospital on his birthday, March 9th, and he died on April 21st; just weeks after being diagnosed.

What happened between March 1st and April 21st 2018 is why Ryan's Law was written.

In the first hospital, Ryan was given morphine and other opioids for pain relief, but those weren't strong enough, so they added fentanyl, which is many times more potent than morphine. The result was him being asleep most of the time. During one of his rare waking moments he said he didn't want to spend his last few weeks sleeping. He told me he

wanted to be able to spend time with his wife, his 9 year old son, his parents, brother, sister, and his many friends.

We suggested medical cannabis as an alternative to fentanyl, which he agreed to. We had a medical cannabis chemist create the cannabis medicines for his pain relief. However, we were informed by the hospital that it was their policy not to allow cannabis use in the hospital.

The irony of that policy is that fentanyl and other opioids, that kill 75,000 people a year in the U.S. were ok to have, but not medical cannabis, that has never killed anyone!

After four weeks on fentanyl, we were able to transfer him to another hospital that allowed medical cannabis. Ryan couldn't swallow anything, not even water, the chemist was able to create a medical cannabis spray administered under the tongue for pain relief.

The result was amazing!

Awake and alert during the day, he was able to have conversations with family and friends, without pain!

Instead of being sleepy from the fentanyl, the medical cannabis provided him with a quality of life for his final three weeks; which allowed him to have much needed conversations with his family; and time to reminisce and laugh with his many friends who came to visit.

Every terminally ill patient should be able to have the same opportunity as Ryan; to spend their final days with as much quality and dignity as possible. They are dying.. Why wouldn't we want that for them?

Following that meeting, we had communications with CMS which regulates Medicare and Medicaid. I believe you have the memo (dated March 19, 2021) we received from them indicating that they do NOT have any regulations that they prohibit a hospital from having medical cannabis in a hospital.

In conclusion, the happiest moments in my life were the first time I held each of my three children when they were born.

The saddest moment in my life was holding Ryan's hand as he took his last breath.

So please, support House Bill 5630 so that my saddest moment is made less painful by ensuring that Ryan's Law will allow thousands of other terminally ill patients to live their final days with the quality and dignity that he was able to experience.