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ACLU OF RI POSITION: SUPPORT

TESTIMONY ON 26-H 7535, AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS – COMPASSIONATE ACCESS TO MEDICAL CANNABIS ACT March 12, 2026

The ACLU of Rhode Island supports this bill which would allow terminally ill patients to use medical cannabis in certain health facilities.

As longtime supporters of Rhode Island's medical marijuana program, we believe that the right to use medicinal cannabis is essential for those suffering from serious and debilitating conditions. Allowing terminally ill patients to use medical cannabis in health facilities ensures that they can receive the care and relief they deserve in their final days, respecting their dignity and personal autonomy.

Research over the last few decades has shown the benefits of marijuana in treating or alleviating pain and reducing other symptoms of illnesses.¹ Studies suggest that medical cannabis use can have a significant impact on patients experiencing symptoms like chronic pain, nausea, and loss of appetite. This bill is a compassionate step forward in recognizing the rights and decisions of terminally ill patients to choose their method of pain relief and have access to all medical options available to them.

For these reasons, the ACLU urges your support of this legislation. Thank you for considering our views.

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK425767/>