



District of Columbia Patients' Cooperative, Inc.
1858 Mintwood Place, #4, NW
Washington, DC, 20009, USA

January 6th, 2011

Honorable Mayor Vincent Gray,

I would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations on becoming Mayor of the District of Columbia. As a DC native, I know it won't be easy, but I believe that through your dedicated leadership the District of Columbia will continue to be one of the finest places to live in America. The challenges you face in the next four years will test your character, but I am confident that you will succeed.

I am writing today concerning a topic that is close to my heart: the implementation of the District's medical marijuana program. As you know, Congress gave the District the green light twice last year by approving Initiative 59 and the subsequent amendment. However, the previous administration chose not to act as quickly as I had hoped and I believe you were given an excellent opportunity to provide the leadership on this important issue.

Originally, the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration was chosen by the previous administration as the District agency that was to oversee the program. After input from the community and stakeholder organizations, it was decided that the next mayor should create an entirely new board to oversee the program's implementation. But without appointments to this board by you, the District's medical cannabis program will not be implemented in a timely fashion and sick patients who will indubitably benefit from medical marijuana will remain without their medicine. Therefore, I urge you to act swiftly and deliberately to appoint the best and brightest the District has to offer to this medical marijuana board and get the ball rolling as soon as possible.

With anticipated budget shortfalls and a change in the political makeup of Congress, I know this year will be interesting for the District of Columbia. The District can either remain fearful of Congress and delay the implementation of the medical cannabis program, or the District can show courage and begin to implement the program, the choice is totally up to you. With a 6% sales tax being applied to the sales of medical cannabis, the District of Columbia has the opportunity to help alleviate some of the anticipated budget shortfalls, but unless the program is diligently implemented the District of Columbia will not see this revenue.

Other states that are in the process of implementing their medical cannabis laws can help guide the District's efforts. For example, in Arizona the residents passed a new medical cannabis law two months ago in November. But instead of dragging their feet like the previous administration, the state of Arizona has already issued a timeline of implementation for patients and stakeholder organizations. From public meetings concerning feedback of the draft regulations to dates in which applications for patients, dispensaries, and cultivation centers will be accepted, the state of Arizona has provided its citizens with a map of how the program will be phased in.

The District, on the other hand, has yet to provide patients and stakeholder organizations

with a road map for implementation. No timeline exists, only vague assurances the program will eventually be implemented. This is not how the program should be handled and why your effective leadership is desired.

There are thousands of District residents who will benefit from medical cannabis and they've waited years, if not much of their adult life, to be able to legally use a medicine that has a track record of effectiveness that extends thousands of years. But they will not see any relief unless you act and appoint members of the board to begin the process.

As the Executive Vice-President of the District of Columbia Patients' Cooperative (DCPC), a non-profit stakeholder organization, co-owner of Capitol Hemp, a District based clothing store with locations in Adams Morgan & Chinatown, and as the former proprietor of a legal dispensary in Holland, I have the knowledge and acumen that I believe will benefit the District's medical cannabis program. But instead of merely calling on you to provide leadership, I would also like to offer my expertise to the District government in order to ensure the program is implemented compassionately.

If you have any questions or comments about the program or cannabis, I would be delighted to be of service, because I believe that only through a strong partnership between the District government and the stakeholder organizations will this program truly be a success.

Thank you for your time and service to District residents.

Sincerely,

Alan Amsterdam

Executive Vice-President, District of Columbia Patients' Cooperative, Inc.

<http://www.DCpatients.org>