

HB 722 - Georgia needs in-state cultivation of medical cannabis

In 2015, HB 1 allowed for possession of medical cannabis for those with eight qualifying conditions, but no means to access it. Families are forced to travel to other states, break federal law bringing it back, and fend for themselves.

In 2016, desperate patients and their doctors need a regulated, in-state cultivation program, in order to provide access to a safe, tested and local medicine – **this is supported by 84% of Georgia voters.**

ALL potential concerns will be addressed:

Issue	Argument	Remedy/Solution
Law enforcement concern	Product will get into the wrong hands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities will be heavily secured ID tags for every plant Oil is not desired by recreational smokers
Law enforcement concern	In-state cultivation will lead to recreational legality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational legality is NOT the issue on the table. Minnesota law enforcement has no concerns with the impact of their current medical in-state cultivation law.
Not enough demand	Only 400 patients have currently signed up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to a safe, regulated, local product and addition of applicable conditions will drive use and help more people. Several companies are ready to invest millions in Georgia.
Federal law	Cultivation is against federal law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical cannabis is a states' rights issue – 23 states so far. Current federal budget eliminates funding for enforcement in legal states.

Realistic Scenario

- Only 0.5% to 2.0% of a medical cannabis state's population are registered patients.¹
- However, 7% of Americans are already regular marijuana smokers.²
- Potential registered patient population is a small percentage of total current cannabis users.

GA Estimate

- 50k-200k
- 700k

Bottom Line: Every concern is being addressed. The only people impacted by a safe, regulated in-state medical cannabis cultivation program are those patients who so desperately need it.

¹ Americans for Safe Access

² National Survey On Drug Use & Health

Medical Cannabis Stats

#	Fact
84.5%	Percentage of Georgia voters that support in-state cultivation of medical cannabis ¹
0	Number of people who have ever died from a marijuana overdose ²
25,760	Number of people who died in 2014 from a prescription drug overdose, more than any year on record – described as “epidemic” by the CDC ³
25%	Annual percentage decrease in prescription drug overdoses in medical cannabis states, starting immediately in the year after the program was implemented ⁴
23	Number of states with a medical cannabis cultivation program ⁵
50,000-200,000	Estimated number of registered medical cannabis patients Georgia can expect, based on percentages from other medical cannabis states ⁶
700,000	Estimated number of Georgians who already use marijuana on a regular basis ⁷
US6630507	Patent number held by the US government, claiming cannabinoids as an antioxidant and neuroprotectant ⁸ – while still keeping it as a Schedule 1 substance with no medical benefit
39	Number of children in the state-sponsored Epidiolex trial ⁹ , after Gov. Deal announced the program over 20 months ago in April of 2014

¹ Opinion Savvy poll conducted November 2015

² Huffington Post referencing the 2014 National Institute on Drug Abuse study

³ National Institute on Drug Abuse

⁴ Journal of American Medical Association – Internal Medicine study, October 2014

⁵ Americans for Safe Access

⁶ Americans for Safe Access – ~0.5%-2.0% of a state’s population become registered patients

⁷ National Survey On Drug Use & Health – ~7% of Americans use marijuana at least once per month

⁸ US Patent Office

⁹ Georgia Regents University presentation presented by Dr. Yong Park at the Georgia Commission on Medical Cannabis hearing, November 2015

For more information, as well as links to medical research, please visit georgiashope.com and safeaccessnow.org.