Sen. John F. Keenan John.Keenan@masenate.gov

/Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez Jeffrey.sanchez@mahouse.gov

Chairman of the Joint Committee on Public Health

State House, Room 413B (Senate)/130 (House)

Boston MA 02133

RE: Opposition to S. 1031 (Copy to subject of email, then erase this direction)

Dear Chairman Keenan/Sanchez:

I oppose S. 1031, scheduled for a hearing in your committee on May 6, 2013. The bill if enacted would gravely restrict access to medicinal cannabis for genuinely debilitated patients, contrary to the overwhelming will of voters across the state, including your legislative district, mine, and 350 of the Commonwealth's cities and towns.

My interest in opposing S. 1031, and supporting the initiative as approved by the voters, arises from [personal experience with medical marijuana, other personal or professional experience, etc.].

Despite your concern about access to this medicine by patients and others, there is no evidence of harm to the public health since the decriminalization of cannabis in Massachusetts four years ago. The bill's restrictions, which unduly burden patient access to this uniquely effective yet nontoxic medicine, include its following provisions:

• Limiting dispensaries to 3-10 statewide, from the 35 set by the initiative (Arizona, with the same population as Massachusetts, is licensing 126 dispensaries);

• Preventing doctors exercising competent professional judgment from certifying patients with other debilitating conditions (beyond those conditions specified in the initiative) for access to medicine, and removing the protection of healthcare professionals from punishment for practice in compliance with the initiative;

• Tasking DPH to set compensation limits for dispensary staff, independent of the preexisting duty of a nonprofit corporation to limit salaries to reasonable levels.

DPH has proposed to regulate medicinal cannabis dispensaries in a manner deemed by many public health professionals to be very restrictive already. In view of the draft regulations and the initiative's broad voter support, I urge you to refer the bill for further study, including your careful monitoring of the public health and safety impacts of the existing initiative as it is implemented in the year to come.

Sincerely,

Name

Address

cc: (see next page)

 Senate President/Speaker of the House President (Therese.Murray@masenate.gov),

Find legislators at: <http://www.malegislature.gov/People/Search>

(Example: New Bedford)

State Sen./Rep, New Bedford: Mark C. Montigny Mark.Montigny@masenate.gov