



To: Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

From: Rachelle Colombo; Executive Director

Date: March 28, 2024

Re: SB 555; Medical Cannabis Pilot Program

The Kansas Medical Society (KMS) is the only statewide association advocating for physicians in every specialty and is dedicated to improving the environment in which Kansas physicians practice medicine and to protecting the health of Kansas' citizens.

KMS appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to SB 555, legalizing the cultivation, prescribing, dispensing and use of so-called "medical" marijuana. SB 555 does not limit the risks associated with cannabis. It establishes broad authority for cultivation, prescribing, dispensing and use of a recreational drug without proven medical efficacy.

KMS has long-standing policy opposing the prescribing and use of any drug or substance—including marijuana—for "medical" purposes if these substances lack Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval which is grounded in scientific evidence of medical efficacy. The FDA's rigorous scientific and evidence-based approval process ensures a drug provides benefits that outweigh its known and potential risks. The FDA has yet to approve marijuana for medical use because there have not been enough large-scale clinical trials showing the benefits of marijuana outweigh its risks in patients with the symptoms it is meant to treat.

Legalizing marijuana for medical use puts physicians in the untenable position of policing the use of a federally prohibited drug. Further, legalization establishes the dangerous precedent of having the legislature determine appropriate medical treatments rather than those trained and licensed to practice the healing arts. This precedent puts politics ahead of scientific, evidence-based proven patient care.

The use of unapproved cannabis and cannabis-derived products can have unpredictable and unintended consequences, including serious safety risks. Also, there has been no FDA review of data from rigorous clinical trials to support that these unapproved products are safe and efficacious for the various therapeutic uses for which they are being recommended. We respectfully request that you do not favorably recommend legislation allowing for the legalization of "medical" marijuana. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.