



John Reeves 18/10/14
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Dear Mr Hodgman, I am writing to you in relation to two issues raised by you this week in regards to the Medical Cannabis situation in Tasmania.

The first is to ask you to clarify your statements made this week on Hansard and a media release that you have assurances from the police that no one involved in the current Upper House Medical Cannabis inquiry will be actively pursued or prosecuted for using or possessing Medical Cannabis. But could still have their cannabis taken from them is the police find it.

“We are very keen to ensure that Tasmanians who are accessing cannabis for medicinal use are not going to be prosecuted,” he said. ”

While I can confirm the police may not prosecute genuine medical use and possession they will remove the cannabis, thus leaving the patient with out medicine and prone to symptom relapse. In my case as I grow some medical plants and last the police visited on another unrelated matter and saw the plants on my veggie patch. I explained my medical, showed them my GP treatment plan that confirms I use medically, am on the DSP with spinal injury, arthritis and FMS,NP. That’s explained further in my Inquiry submission.

So the seizure of plant material has meant running out and having no suitable meds for some months,meaning symptom return and increased reliance on toxic script meds.

The second is to encourage you to reconsider your position with regards to supporting the amendment Bill currently before Parliament and due to be voted on 29th October. We understand you have an internal Liberal agreement with other states on the issue but we are asking you to put Tasmanians first, not last.

it will be lot easier for the Health Dept. to count and collate patients using MC and for Doctors to discuss and deal with it in a reasonable, professional manner under more legal circumstances.

“Premier Will Hodgman said he was satisfied with comments from police that they had no intention of prosecuting medicinal cannabis users.

He said the government would likely not support the laws, as he had received advice showing they could create unintended risks and consequences.

The government’s initial advice on the laws indicates there would be no limit on the quantity grown and used, and could allow someone to self-medicate.

It would also be a worthwhile Tasmanian contribution to the 'national trial' as a trial of some realistic legal changes to see how they go in terms of better management of the MC issue. Make no mistake Mr Hodgman, this is not some excuse for people to grow as much cannabis as they want, this is purely a health issue. An emergency situation in many ways.

On the first issue I would like to request that you 'put that in writing' so I can show the letter to the police if they happen to find themselves in my veggie patch as they did last year and removed 10 plants, putting a sizable dent in my years supply of medicines and causing the current situation where patients such as epileptic Jem B who is responding well simply run out because we cannot resupply till harvest. I am sure you can see the practicality involved here in have some clear instructions for the police rather than just referring to some online documentation that the "premier said its ok". Which is little more than a sad indicator of the level of understanding politicians seem to have towards the suffering of seriously ill people and the Medical Cannabis issue in general. I among many others seriously believe sick Tasmanians deserve a whole lot more than this in legal rights and more immediate direct action than, 'it will be ok, other states are going to run 'trials'.

I would also like to question some of the statements you made regarding why you don't think the bill should be supported, quoted as "we have advice that there are no limits on amounts" and people will self medicate.

On the first statement, well its probably quite easy to put some kind of limit or guidance, for the personal use, similar to current laws would be fine, up to 1 kilo for personal use, or a years supply. A few months supply of tincture or drops would seem reasonable. This could easily be amended to the bill and I am sure no patients or police would have trouble following it. It is also worth noting that no amendment to the cultivation section of the act is proposed at all, so a non issue really.

The 2nd statement is just bizarre really, in the context that the whole concept of current medical cannabis use is to *self medicate* and the aim of the bill before parliament is to exempt people from prosecution for doing so, until a functioning legal delivery system is achieved here. Medical Cannabis is something patients choose to use, it doesn't need to be prescribed by a Doctor.

The real question here Mr Hodgman is what does this all mean for Tasmanians using cannabis medically? The primary focus of the need for the amendment is the complete emergency nature of the medical conditions involved and the lifesaving nature of their MC to the patients involved and their families.

The obvious meaning we can now see and hear coming from you is a resounding NO. NO we don't have any basic human rights to choose our medicines, no the liberal government wont support a simple amendment to establish those rights legally and NO, we the governments simply not interested in taking the needs of people seriously on this issue.

possibly the strongest opportunity via bill for government is to actually begin the process of collating and documenting Tasmania medical cannabis users in order to gain some kind of realistic understanding of the current situation in terms of numbers and conditions

Whilst its potentially positive that Australian governments have agreed to a 'coordinated approach' on the issue and have begun to establish some "clinical trials" etc.. I can assure that neither myself nor anyone else in the Medical cannabis community is fooled by this move. its imply just another way of stonewalling the issue, putting it in a box where

very little actually happens. It very obvious that the governments will try and 'contain; the issue and come up with some costly restrictive pharmaceutical 'solution' that's doesn't even come close to meeting peoples needs and people will simply continue to grow and use cannabis medically themselves and help each other out via the compassion clubs because no one trusts the Government, Doctors or the Medical system that will obviously seek to keep their controls over the same system that has been delivery supposedly 'safe' well trialled medicines for decades that simply is using the population s guinea pigs, while a simply herb that people can grow themselves is restricted or mutilated in to fitting with deeply corrupt and dysfunctional systems that simply refuses to give the people a helping hand on this one.

Recent quote from Dr Caldicott A Canberra pain specialist...

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/backgroundbriefing/2014-10-19/5816112>

“This is an act of civil disobedience that is occurring already all over Australia. There are thousands of people doing this already. So what we should probably look at it is recruiting those who are already using it and seeing what effects it has on them.”

‘What I don't think it's useful is to put it in the hands of the pharmaceutical companies and to allow them to make enormous profits out of a product that actually probably can be consumed safely without detriment to the Australian taxpayer.’

Put simply,if the Tasmanian government is serious about starting to deal with the current MC situation it will say yes to the amendment bill currently before parliament, however if the government is intent on selling out the basic human rights of sick and dying Tasmanians and completely ignoring the issue pending some kind of bogus national agreement and the neglectful lobbying of the AMA then continue to vote NO to MC reforms. It is something that Tasmanians will remember come election time. And if any one of the current people using MC to stay alive dies whilst its illegal to use it, their blood will simply be on yr hands.

This week in Davenport little 2 year old April, with sever epilepsy when down again and was rushed to hospital,she uses MC daily supplied by Mullaways MC and the Dr's said they would not allow its use in hospital as its illegal, her mother Jesse says its the only thing keeping her alive. Its a life threatening situation and the legal restrictions are hampering peoples access to the medicine and restricting supplies and quality issues. This is a very serious situation Mr Hodgman., one thats deserves the full poitical support of the Tasmanian Liberals to wards a longer term solution and effective management of the situation.

Time to begin Mr Hodgman, people have had enough of NO's on this issue, its time for some Yes action, or the Tasmanian Libs could easily be facing a big fat NO vote at the next election and MC patients will be leading than one for sure.

John Reeves Mon, 27 October 2014
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