

Letters to the editor essay samples

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The San Diego Union-Tribune

P. O. Box 120191, San Diego, CA 92112

The Editor

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Dear Sir or Madam,

David Garrick’s 10/15 article on San Diego’s first medical marijuana dispensary clearly illustrates it is time to allow medical marijuana dispensaries to operate in our city. Medical marijuana has been legal in San Diego since 1996. California was the first state to create a medical marijuana program, enacted by Proposition 215 in 1996 and was approved by initiative with a 55% majority. That was almost twenty years ago. San Diego needs to allow the patients that need medical cannabis the opportunity to buy it in a safe and convenient location. There are over 100 illegal “ pot shops” in San Diego County, and it is not a good policy to allow medical marijuana to be dispensed without strict government regulations by trained and ethical professionals. Instead of these pot shops we need

licensed, regulate, and routinely inspected medical marijuana dispensing facilities. Would you want your grandmother inside a pot shop full of bongos and Grateful Dead t-shirts, or a modern medical facility that catered to her needs and made sure she received the attention and information she needed?

The owner of the proposed dispensary - called The Green Alternative - is Dr. David Blair, a respected business ethics professor at San Diego State University. He plans to operate The Green Alternative as a non-profit. He is not interested in getting rich, he believes in the science behind medical marijuana. Recent studies have established that medicinal cannabis is a safe, effective and humane treatment for patients with terminal and debilitating diseases. THC - the key psychoactive constituent of marijuana - has been found to be a safe and effective painkilling alternative to conventional opiate painkillers. These traditional painkillers, such as oxycontin, are highly addictive and have been blamed for an "overdose epidemic" that claims thousands of lives a year. We don't need that in San Diego.

The arguments against the proposed medical marijuana dispensary are illogical, based on fear, and rely on anecdotal evidence developed to support political agendas or big pharmaceutical corporate interests. Having a medical marijuana dispensary in an area is as safe as being near a pharmacy, which regularly fills prescriptions for dangerous opiates. Instead of allowing shady illegal pot shops to dispense marijuana without any regulations, it is time for San Diego to make good on the mandate the people created in 1996, and make medical marijuana a legitimate and regulated

industry so the sick patients that need medical cannabis can get access to the medication they need. It's a matter of good health care, and it's the responsibility of the City of San Diego.

Work Cited

Garrick, David. " SD OKs First Legal Pot Shop Otay Mesa Dispensary Approved by Hearing Officer; Appeal Still Possible." San Diego Union Tribune. N. p., 15 Oct. 2014. Web. 11 Nov. 2014. .