

Legislative Assembly

North Dakota House of Representatives

STATE CAPITOL
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Representative Steve Vetter

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COMMITTEES:

Judiciary (Vice Chair)
Government and Veterans Affairs

Chairman Ruby and members of the committee,

My name is Steve Vetter, I represent district 18, eastern part of Grand Forks along the Red River. It has a little rural area going as far north as Manvel, ND.

The objective of HB 1321 is to lower costs for patients and the dispensaries. It does this by doing 3 things:

Lowers the fees for the Dispensaries by 10%.

Requires medical card holders to renew their cards every 2 years instead of every 1 year.

Makes a small increase in the amount a patient can purchase to take advantage of lower prices.

*** Lowers the fees for the Dispensaries by 10%.

The Medical Cannabis users represent the responsible North Dakotans who agree to regulation. We need to preserve our medical cannabis program that was approved by every county except one in ND. Remember, we are talking about medical cannabis not recreational. With neighboring states becoming legal recreational states. Many North Dakotans will risk punishment to drive across state lines and self medicate themselves instead because of cost and convenience. This is evidenced by the huge drop in sales in the dispensaries in the western side of the state since in Montana it has become legal. The implementation in Minnesota will affect Grand Forks and Fargo. We need to support our medical cannabis program so we can regulate and maintain a safe environment for our citizens.

A 10% decrease in fees is a small but reasonable move to help the medical cannabis dispensaries stay in business.

***Changes Renewal from 1 to 2 years.

The cost to renew a patient medical card is expensive and only available in the larger population areas of North Dakota. About \$200 for the nurse/doctor appointment and a medical card. Requiring the card every two years cuts this expense by half.

*** Makes a small increase in the amount a patient can purchase.

The cost of the product is priced significantly lower when purchased in the larger amounts.

1 gram \$17

3.5 grams \$52 \$14.86/gram

7 grams \$90 \$12.86/gram

14 grams \$160 \$11.43/gram

28 grams \$300. \$10.71/gram

The goal of this provision is to lower cost for the consumer and increase sales for the dispensaries.

Medical Cannabis has been a game changer for thousands of North Dakotans when helping them with many debilitating conditions. Ask someone who it has helped. It has saved lives. Please do not believe the ridiculous claims that have been made. Myself when considering how I should vote drug related topics, my first consideration is safety. The claims are opposite to what they say. No one has ever overdosed on cannabis. It is a safe drug and regulated by our state. It doesn't cause suicide, it treats depression taken in the correct dosages. Some claim it is a gateway drug. But actually it is a gateway drug in the opposite direction. Former alcoholics and addicts have used cannabis to calm their nerves, veterans to treat PTSD, treating Parkinson's and seizure disorders and treating pain issues instead of using alcohol, pain killers, heroin, cocaine or other hard drugs that will kill you.

Remember, this bill is for medical cannabis of which is regulated by our state not recreational. Please help lower the cost of medical cannabis in our state and vote for Do Pass recommendation for HB 1321.