

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE REGULATORY
FRAMEWORK FOR CANNABIS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Craig Ellis
Secretary
Legalise Cannabis NSW Party

Dear Craig

Submission on Cannabis

I was born in 1954 and have suffered from chronic pain for decades. I have tried prescription drugs, alcohol, prescription drugs + alcohol but all that did was put me on a very slippery slope. I became an alcoholic and was a very miserable person with very little quality of life. I started to have suicidal ideations. I have had six (6) stays in various hospitals trying to sort myself out. Nothing really worked.

I was put on an invalid pension, saw various psychologists and psychiatrists, tried various treatments, pills and potions but to no avail. In the end I was virtually left to myself. I turned to Oxycodone and vodka. This helped but I was a mess. I couldn't function properly and my life and the life of my family was affected. I became a non-responsive lump that sat in an armchair all day.

To cut a long story short, about 5 years ago I found out (by accident I might add) about medicinal cannabis. It was nothing short of miraculous. It has taken a while but I am now nearly drug free and my quality of life has improved greatly. I am exercising and taking part in social activities. My GP visits have dropped markedly. My drug intake has fallen markedly.

Medicinal cannabis has helped greatly. It doesn't remove the pain but it makes it manageable. I am now able to function with a degree of normality to the great relief of my family.

HOWEVER, it comes at a cost. It is very expensive. I am a pensioner and find it hard to afford the only medication that has allowed me to now live a reasonably normal life. If cannabis could be decriminalised or made available at subsidised cost to those that are genuinely in need it would be a game changer. I could grow a couple of plants to keep me supplied.

Whilst taking drugs and alcohol I could legally drive myself around but now I have to rely on my wife. Why? Previously I could take 3 or 4 Oxycodone and a couple shots of vodka jump in the car and drive around. Oxycodone was a "legal" drug and a couple shots of vodka wouldn't put me over .05. I never drove in this condition as I felt totally incompetent and likely to crash or worse. **BUT IT WAS LEGAL!**

Cannabis helps me greatly but doesn't get me "high" as the pain negates this. I can have a few puffs and feel the pain start to ease in a gentle way while still feeling fully competent to drive.

However, if I have ONE puff of cannabis and drive, I am breaking the law. It is ridiculous. I can no longer drive myself around and rely totally on my wife and public transport. This is problematic in itself as busses are not the most comfortable mode of transport (I have 4 bulging discs in my lower back). This is just another cost.

This is a precis of my story. I am happy to discuss it further and expand if needed. It is a tale of being born with a chronic condition and going downhill from there. It has been a lifetime battle and when I finally found something that helps it comes with so many riders. I just wanted to have a say and try to help make a change. If I had to choose between Oxycodone and cannabis the weed will win every time.

Best regards