
DIGEST

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HB 627 Engrossed

2018 Regular Session

Lyons

Abstract: Authorizes the recommendation or prescription of medical marijuana in treating certain health conditions associated with autism spectrum disorder.

Recommendation of Medical Marijuana

Present law authorizes physicians who are domiciled in La. and licensed by and in good standing with the La. State Board of Medical Examiners to recommend tetrahydrocannabinols (commonly referred to as "medical marijuana"), or chemical derivatives thereof, for therapeutic use by patients clinically diagnosed as suffering from a debilitating medical condition. Defines "debilitating medical condition" to mean cancer, positive status for human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, cachexia or wasting syndrome, seizure disorders, epilepsy, spasticity, Crohn's disease, muscular dystrophy, or multiple sclerosis.

Proposed law retains present law and adds the following conditions associated with autism spectrum disorder as conditions for which physicians may recommend treatment with medical marijuana:

- (1) Repetitive or self-stimulatory behavior of such severity that the physical health of the person with autism is jeopardized.
- (2) Avoidance of others or inability to communicate of such severity that the physical health of the person with autism is jeopardized.
- (3) Self-injuring behavior.
- (4) Physically aggressive or destructive behavior.

Proposed law stipulates that no physician shall recommend medical marijuana for treatment of any condition associated with autism spectrum disorder for a patient who is under the age of 18 unless the physician is a pediatric subspecialist licensed by the La. State Board of Medical Examiners and credentialed by the La. Board of Pharmacy.

Prescription of Medical Marijuana

Present law authorizes physicians who are domiciled in La. and licensed by and in good standing

with the La. State Board of Medical Examiners to prescribe, rather than recommend, medical marijuana for therapeutic use by patients clinically diagnosed as suffering from a debilitating medical condition if and when the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration reclassifies marijuana from a Schedule I drug to a Schedule II drug, thereby allowing the drug to be legally prescribed. Defines "debilitating medical condition" to mean cancer, positive status for human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, cachexia or wasting syndrome, seizure disorders, epilepsy, spasticity, Crohn's disease, muscular dystrophy, or multiple sclerosis.

Proposed law retains present law and adds the following conditions associated with autism spectrum disorder as conditions for which physicians may prescribe treatment with medical marijuana if and when such prescribing becomes legal:

- (1) Repetitive or self-stimulatory behavior of such severity that the physical health of the person with autism is jeopardized.
- (2) Avoidance of others or inability to communicate of such severity that the physical health of the person with autism is jeopardized.
- (3) Self-injuring behavior.
- (4) Physically aggressive or destructive behavior.

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(Amends R.S. 40:1046(A)(2) and §2 of Act No. 96 of 2016 R.S.)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Stipulate that no physician shall recommend or prescribe medical marijuana for treatment of any condition associated with autism spectrum disorder for a patient who is under the age of 18 unless the physician is a pediatric subspecialist licensed by the La. State Board of Medical Examiners and credentialed by the La. Board of Pharmacy.
2. Make technical changes.