



**Illinois
Cannabis
Patients
Association**

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Congress Removes Obstacles to Implementing D.C. Medical Cannabis Law & Illinois Medical Cannabis Endorsements

On December 16, President Obama signed historic legislation to end the decade long ban on implementation of the medical cannabis law Washington, D.C. voters passed in 1998.

The “Barr amendment,” a rider attached to appropriations for the District, has forbidden D.C. from extending legal protection to qualified medical cannabis patients. The omnibus-spending bill by both houses of Congress removes this onerous provision, allowing the District to finally implement its voter-approved law.

The vote marks a history-making shift on the medical cannabis issue. It the first time Congress has ever given its assent to a state or local law that permits medical use of cannabis. It shows that Congress is listening to voters, who have supported protection for medical cannabis patients for well over a decade, as well as to the medical community’s growing recognition of the medical value of cannabis.

Coming on heels of the Department of Justice decision not to interfere with state medical cannabis laws, this shows that the ground has fundamentally shifted.

According to a 2008 Mason-Dixon poll, 68% of Illinois registered voters support doctor-approved access to medical cannabis, and more than 1,000 Illinois physicians, 1,000 Illinois nurses, the Illinois Nurses Association, and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago also support access to this medicine for those who are suffering from a serious and debilitating condition.

Some newspaper editorial boards that have endorsed the need for a medical cannabis program in Illinois include the Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Rockford Register Star, St. Louis Post Dispatch, Peoria Journal Star, State Journal Register and Moline Dispatch.

Furthermore, medical cannabis is legal under the laws of 13 states, with bills under consideration in several others, including Illinois. The time couldn’t be better for the Illinois House of Representatives to approve SB 1381, the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act.

The Illinois Cannabis Patients Association – because patients are not criminals