



Alabama Chapter

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Dear Medical Cannabis Study Commission Member:

Thank you for your important work on studying cannabis and its use for medical reasons. As you continue your exploration on this issue, I wanted to share the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics' position on medical marijuana, which we released in April during the 2019 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature.

The Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics opposes the legalization of medical marijuana outside of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval process. Marijuana is not regulated by the FDA, therefore its purity, potency, and consistency cannot be reliably verified, and efficacy, as well as risk-benefit analysis are yet not determined. Though anecdotal accounts have shown that certain cannabinoids could benefit children with specific chronic debilitating diseases, there have been few published studies to date about the effects of cannabinoids in the pediatric population. For this reason, our organization strongly advocates for research and development of pharmaceutical cannabinoids and supports a review of policies promoting research on the medical use of these compounds before making them legal.

Non-FDA approved "medical" marijuana remains listed as a Schedule I controlled substance. There is no official guidance for pediatricians to follow when recommending marijuana and they would be in violation of federal law doing so.

Currently, however, there are four pharmaceutical grade medications, THC and CBD based, that have been approved by the FDA and are available for physicians to use as clinically indicated. For this reason alone, a law to legalize medical marijuana is unnecessary.

Our position is informed by the lack of available research and supported by evidence-based policy and the position of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Thank you for your consideration of our position as you continue your work on the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wes Stubblefield".

Wes Stubblefield, MD, FAAP
President

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