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Veterans, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Addiction and Suicide

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A worrisome component of Veteran Post Traumatic Stress Disorder with chronic pain is the constant, ever hovering specter of addiction and suicide among the Veteran population. The suicide rate sometimes reported to be as much as 22 a day, may seem a high estimate but a suicide day is 30 a month and one a day too much.

When considering the high rates of drug addiction and suicide among the Veteran population one must also consider the following reports. A recent Journal of the American Medical Association report of a 25% drop in opioid overdose deaths in states with medical marijuana laws and a Cato Institute report from January of 2015 citing a 5% drop in suicides in states having medical marijuana laws. We would expect to see a similar drop in Veteran addiction overdose deaths and suicides should the Assembly pass a Medical cannabis law this session. Indeed one can rightfully say that passage of a medical cannabis law this session is a matter of life or death for our Veterans and for our civilian citizens suffering from addiction and depression leading to suicide.

Veterans have long recognized the beneficial effects of medical marijuana and Veterans in medical cannabis states report great success when using medical marijuana for PTSD, chronic pain and a number of other conditions for which medical marijuana is effective.

We strongly urge the Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs and Kentucky Assembly to actively support passage of a strong comprehensive medical cannabis bill as soon as possible. The lives of our Veterans and citizens depend on it!