

Tabled by
Hon. V. Goodwin MLC

 25/11/14

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WITS No.: 83974 - PHS - OCMO - PSB

Petition No:

Response to Petition

Title of Petition: **A system be introduced for medicinal cannabis to be trialled, tested and developed in conjunction with the University of Tasmania**

- 1 The Petition of the undersigned Citizens of Tasmania draw to the attention of the Legislative Council a proposal to conduct a clinical trial using Cannabis whole plant as a medicine, which will:
- 2 Identify the potential advantage to individuals suffering from a range of medical conditions; and highlight that
- 3 Cannabis is an effective way to treat certain conditions and alleviate pain and suffering; and that
- 4 A medical cannabis industry would benefit the Tasmanian economy and not harm the poppy industry.

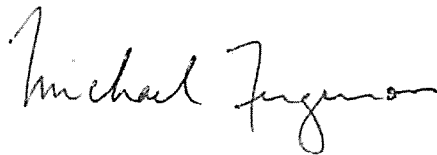
And your petitioners therefore request that:

- 5 A system be introduced for medicinal cannabis to be trialled, tested and developed (in conjunction with the University of Tasmania); and that
- 6 Legislation be introduced to allow individuals who may benefit from Cannabis to have access to such medication as prescribed by their doctor.

Government's Position:

- Despite the well circulated claims of therapeutic benefit, the fact remains the Therapeutic Goods Administration, being the Australian body responsible for independent assessment of therapeutic products has confirmed the quality, safety and efficacy of only one medicinal cannabis product, namely Sativex. It is premature to create an industry based on yet unproven therapeutic claims. The interests of public health and safety should not be a secondary consideration to economic opportunity.
- There are no legislative or regulatory amendments required to allow for authorisation of clinical trials by an exempted public institution such as the University of Tasmania. Trials on the administration of substances to humans always, quite reasonably, create concern at the risk to participants. The protections afforded by an approval by a human ethics committee will be central to any such proposal, as required by the National Health and Medical Research (NHMRC) Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

- The Tasmanian Government does not support the use of cannabis products that fall outside existing regulatory and legal frameworks. Australians must be able to feel confident that any medication with high level health claims has sufficient high standard evidence of quality, safety and efficacy. I maintain that we should hold the potential medicinal properties of cannabis up to the same level of scrutiny that we do for all medicines on the Australian market.
- The Tasmanian Government will properly consider any proposal put to it regarding medicinal cannabis on a case by case basis by assessing the merits consistent with current relevant standards and State and Commonwealth legislation.



Michael Ferguson MP
Minister for Health

Date: 8 / 10 / 2014