



September 7, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

The American Brain Coalition (ABC) and undersigned members of the brain health community respectfully request that you take up and pass H.R. 8454, the Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act, after the August recess. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation will combat the current obstacles scientists face to understanding the potential effects of utilizing medical marijuana and cannabidiol (CBD) for patients facing brain diseases and disorders by allowing researchers to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess them for the purposes of medical research.

Our organizations are committed to reducing the burden of brain diseases and disorders, which affect over 100 million US citizens. More than 700 million individuals globally live with psychiatric or neurological conditions.<sup>1</sup> Americans suffering from neurologic, psychiatric, and psychological conditions are awaiting new treatments, and research is costly and inherently risky. Medical marijuana and CBD could provide many patients real relief if we fully understood the associated benefits and hazards. If adopted, this legislation will lift the regulatory and supply barriers currently impeding scientists and potentially provide new therapeutic options for patients with a full range of neurological conditions including epilepsy, multiple sclerosis-related spasticity, sleep apnea, Tourette syndrome, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress. Besides supporting needed research, this bill would ensure patients with brain injuries and disorders can discuss the positive and negative effects of medical marijuana and CBD as a treatment option with their physician.

The Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act is essential to ensuring the millions of Americans suffering from brain diseases and disorders have access to all forms of treatments. Our organizations urge the passage of this legislation as soon as possible. If you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please contact Katie Sale, ABC's Executive Director at [ksale@americanbraincoalition.org](mailto:ksale@americanbraincoalition.org).

Sincerely,

American Brain Coalition  
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Brain Foundation

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<sup>1</sup> Gooch CL, Pracht E, Borenstein AR. The burden of neurological disease in the United States: A summary report and call to action. *Ann Neurol*. 2017;81(4):479-484. doi: 10.1002/ana.24897

American College of Neuropsychopharmacology  
American Epilepsy Society  
American Society of Clinical Psychopharmacology  
Anxiety and Depression Association of America  
Baker Street Behavioral Health  
Benign Essential Blepharospasm Research Foundation  
CFCR  
Cohen Veterans Bioscience  
EndBrainCancer Initiative (EBCI)  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences  
Hydrocephalus Association  
International Essential Tremor Foundation  
M-CM Network  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Ataxia Foundation  
Patrick Risha CTE Awareness Foundation  
Syngap Research Fund, Inc  
The Brain Donor Project  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research  
University of Texas at Dallas  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

cc:

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
The Honorable Brian Schatz