



Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Hill, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 57. My name is Melissa Ryan and I am a licensed massage therapist and legislative chair for The American Massage Therapy Association – Ohio Chapter (AMTA-OH). AMTA-OH would like to thank Senators Huffman and Hill for bringing this bill before this committee and setting a responsible path for cultivation and use of hemp products.

In the past, the use of CBD had become integrated with Massage Therapy and the topical application was an acceptable practice. However, with the current classification of CBD as a class 1 drug, this is a tool that has been removed from our tool box. As a Licensed Massage Therapist here in Ohio I would be risking my license if I were to continue to use any of the products that my clients had become accustomed to. AMTA-OH is working diligently to demonstrate the role Massage Therapy can and should play with regard to opioid crisis. As we are all well aware, according to the Centers for Disease Control, deaths from prescription opioids have more than quadrupled since 1999 and our medical community is pleading for alternative means of non-narcotic pain control. As I sit at the Ohio Medical Board Meeting every month, in every single meeting the topic of opioid addiction and pain control is on the agenda.

In light of opioid crisis, many health organizations and governmental agencies are looking for alternative means to manage pain and AMTA-OH is always looking for ways to help.

Let me explain how the current classification of CBD has affected the Massage Therapy community here in Ohio. Prior to the passage of House Bill 523, many, many massage therapists in Ohio had incorporated topical CBD products into their practice. Most of our state conventions had representatives that educated us on their products and even one person to inform us of the efficacy of the high-level products versus those produced by the multilevel marketers. The presentations were all done with the medical applications in mind.

In my personal practice, a medically based Massotherapy Clinic in Steubenville, I asked all my clients to address any possible drug interactions with their physicians and/or pharmacists prior to beginning its use. Unfortunately, I did not keep statistics as to exactly how many people I used the products on, but I assure you it was numerous and we had very few problems with complications or drug interactions. Actually, the biggest issue most of the clients relayed to me was the impression by their family and friends that they were using marijuana, which of course, as I am sure you are well aware, is not the case as CBD does not contain any THC.

For those that were cleared by their physician/pharmacist to use the products most all were very pleased. I used it to address any conditions in which the client was experiencing pain. It is important to note that most patients either didn't want to be put on opioids or were trying CBD in an attempt to cut back on the amount opioids they were taking.

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I would like to cite one specific Worker's Compensation client that had been the unfortunate nurse involved in a crush injury when an exceptionally large patient fell on top of her leaving her with multiple fractures of her cervical and lumber spine and resulted in her living with a lot of chronic pain. Between the massage therapy and the CBD products, over the course of the next several months she and her physician were able to cut her narcotic use by one third and they planned to continue in that direction with her using the CBD on herself.

Another client that reaped the benefits of CBD was a dear friend of mine that started coming to me for treatment of the muscular pain of Multiple Sclerosis. We worked together for 2-1/2 years combining massage and CBD. Unfortunately, her condition advanced into ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). Unfortunately, her condition deteriorated to the point that she could no longer travel and I delivered the CBD oil to her at her home. Shortly after making these arrangements the laws changed here in Ohio and I could no longer use or distribute the product to her. Her family was able to make arrangements to have it delivered to their home across the Ohio River in West Virginia and they were able to find a therapist there to step in where I no longer could. Her condition, as with most all ALS patients became quite grave and she passed away just a few weeks ago. While attending her funeral, her daughter wanted me to know that when all that conventional medicine had to offer was no longer working, CBD was the only product that continued to give her any relief at all. She used the CBD products right up until the day she passed.

As you can see, CBD and Massage Therapy can and should play a role in non-narcotic pain control and at least with regard to the legal use of CBD, passage of SB 57 would allow the Licensed Massage Therapists of Ohio to once again incorporate it into our protocols. Outside of CBD, AMTA – OH looks forward to discussing how massage therapy can be a resource in non-opiate pain management.

I thank you for your attention and I am happy to answer any questions.

Melissa Ryan, LMT

Board Member/Legislative Chair

AMTA-OH