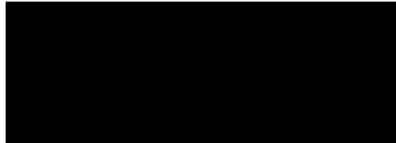




**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. BOX 3378  
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

December 19, 2017



Dear 

**Subject: Denial of Petition to Add General Anxiety Disorder (GAD) as a Qualifying Condition for the Medical Use of Cannabis in the State of Hawaii**

This letter is in response to the petition that you submitted on June 16, 2017, and written testimony submitted on September 20, 2017, requesting the addition of GAD as a qualifying condition for the medical use of cannabis in the State of Hawaii. Thank you for your willingness to share such personal information. I respect and admire not only the progress you have made in coping with GAD, but also your efforts and courage in advocating for others impacted by GAD.

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) reviewed your petition and found that it meets the requirements, as specified in HAR § 11-160-7, for DOH to consider adding GAD as a qualifying medical condition.

In addition to reviewing your submission, DOH considered public testimony, laws and policies of medical cannabis programs in other parts of the country, and the published scientific literature. DOH finds that:

- All written and oral testimony submitted for the public hearing was supportive of adding GAD as a qualifying medical condition;
- Of the 29 states and U.S. jurisdictions permitting medical cannabis, only one includes GAD as a qualifying health condition, and it does so in limited situations; and
- A review of the available peer-reviewed scientific evidence finds limited and inconclusive medical evidence that cannabis has beneficial use in the treatment or alleviation of symptoms of anxiety, social phobia, and Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD), and no evidence specific to GAD; and
- Because the prevalence of GAD, high rate of comorbidities, and dearth of scientific evidence to support use of cannabis in the treatment of GAD, the potential for adverse outcomes is a public health concern.

December 19, 2017

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After investigation and careful consideration of the available information, DOH has determined that, at this time, there is not sufficient evidence supporting the use of medical cannabis for GAD. DOH cannot support adding GAD as a qualifying condition for the approval of medical cannabis use in Hawaii, and the petition must be denied.

Should more evidence become available in the future showing that medical cannabis has beneficial use regarding GAD as evidenced from human trials, we would be willing to re-evaluate GAD as a potential qualifying condition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Virginia Pressler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "V" at the beginning.

Virginia Pressler, M.D.  
Director of Health