



September 19, 2018

The Honorable Matt Gaetz
United States House of Representatives
507 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gaetz,

On behalf of The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF), I write to express my support and appreciation for your legislation, H.R. 5634, the *Medical Cannabis Research Act of 2018*. It is estimated that nearly 1 million people in the United States are living with Parkinson's disease (PD), with an estimated annual economic burden of \$26.4 billion. MJFF is dedicated to safeguarding access to appropriate health care services and treatments for PD patients.

MJFF advocates on behalf of the PD community, including both patients and families, and is committed to exploring new treatment options for those living with the disease. This includes conducting research on cannabis to determine potential therapeutic use. At this time, there has not been enough research done on cannabis to determine whether it is an effective treatment option. Easing barriers to research invites scientists to determine if cannabis may or may not safely and effectively help patients manage the symptoms associated with Parkinson's.

Current regulations surrounding cannabis block comprehensive medical research on the drug. Because of its federal classification as a Schedule I drug, coupled with the low quantity produced by the sole federally-approved growing site, researchers do not have the proper materials to conduct the necessary research. H.R.5634 calls for additional growing sites to produce cannabis for the purpose of conducting medical research. This allows researchers the opportunity to potentially unlock new therapies and treatments for patients with PD.

MJFF applauds you for authoring this important piece of legislation, and thanks you for your support of advancing medical research. The PD community is looking for a research breakthrough and is hopeful that one is found soon. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Aaron Polacek at apolacek@michaeljfox.org or by phone at 202-638-4101 ext.252.

Sincerely,

Ted Thompson, JD
Senior Vice President of Public Policy