

For Immediate Release

New Florida Bills Improve Medical Marijuana Access for Veterans

HB 887 and SB 974 will help Veterans on the Road to Relief.

Melbourne, FL - Florida has long recognized the danger of opiates and the need for opiate alternatives, particularly among our veteran population. Representative Susan Valdés and Senator Keith Truenow’s new bill aims to provide opiate-free relief for more Florida veterans. HB 887 and SB 974 reduce the fee for “issuance, replacement, or renewal” of patient cards for veterans. This gives improved access to affordable, safe, and effective medicine through Florida’s medical marijuana program.



Each qualified medical marijuana patient and caregiver currently pays an annual fee to the Department of Health of \$75.00. The bills would provide each veteran a direct savings of \$60.00 annually. This 80% reduction in costs is an incentive for Veterans to enter the medical programs and makes the fee of remaining in the program affordable.

Improving access to medical marijuana has been a priority of the Florida Cannabis Action Network since the beginning of the program. Veterans groups have lobbied for reform at the Capitol while dedicating resources to help Veterans access the legal medical marijuana program.

The Grateful Veteran (501(c)(3)) has provided free cards and free or reduced-cost doctor visits to more than 200 veterans since June. Jeff DeMond, founder of The Grateful Veteran, knows, “Saving veterans money isn’t symbolic — it directly increases access for an underserved population.”

For many veterans, the cost of maintaining a medical marijuana identification card is a real barrier. This legislation lowers that cost, expands access for an underserved veteran community, and allows nonprofits like The Grateful Veteran to direct more resources toward peer-to-peer support and mental health education. It’s a practical step that honors service through action.

“Because the VA is barred from recommending cannabis, veterans are left to navigate complex state laws and pay out of pocket for treatment. A discounted medical marijuana card would bring meaningful relief to our community,” said retired Senior Chief Tammy Long, a 26-year Navy

combat veteran and founder of BattleBuds, which provides peer support and advocacy for veterans exploring cannabis-based care.

Jodi James, president of Florida Cannabis Action Network, reiterates her support, stating: “Lower fees allow nonprofits like The Grateful Veteran to redirect limited resources into peer support and mental health education. Floridians support our veterans, and this bill shows that our legislature does, too.”

The Grateful Veterans (501 (c) (3)) and The Florida Cannabis Action Network are thrilled about the introduction of HB 887 and SB 974. These bills represent five years of advocacy by groups representing Veterans alongside the Florida Cannabis Action Network.

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About The Grateful Veteran

The Grateful Veteran is a Florida-based nonprofit dedicated to empowering veterans through education, advocacy, and access to essential health and wellness resources. Founded by veterans and supported by medical and first-responder professionals, the organization works to reduce barriers within complex systems while advancing responsible, veteran-centered policy solutions that improve quality of life for those who have served.

About Florida Cannabis Action Network (FLCAN):

The Florida Cannabis Action Network (FLCAN) is a 27-year-old statewide organization based in Melbourne, Florida. FLCAN has spent nearly three decades promoting the benefits of cannabis for health, economy, and environment. Our members are active citizens committed to implementing sensible cannabis policies at the state and federal levels. We engage in lobbying, public education, and grassroots activism to ensure the responsible use and regulation of cannabis.

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For more information about FLCAN and our initiatives, visit our website: www.FLCAN.org

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