

# Florida could be the next medical marijuana state

## Organizers around Florida ready to collect signatures

The Florida Division of Elections has approved a petition that may place a constitutional amendment on the Florida ballot that would allow the use of marijuana for medical purposes.

People United For Medical Marijuana has received approval to circulate a petition to place this issue before Florida voters in 2010. This amendment would give patients the right to grow, purchase, possess and obtain marijuana for medical treatment.

According to medical reports there are more than 1.7 million seriously ill people in the state of Florida that could benefit from marijuana's medicinal properties. The uses for this medicine range from pain relief to stopping the spread of breast cancer. It has also been shown to facilitate stem cell implantation. Marijuana can be used to treat Alzheimer's, arthritis, cancer, glaucoma, Parkinson's and other conditions.

"Patients need a safe, affordable, and effective medication. We hope Florida will lead the nation in marijuana research to further its uses as a medicine," said Kim Russell, chairman of People United For Medical Marijuana.

Medical marijuana has documented history leading back 5,000 years. It



could legally be used up until 1970 when the federal government said it had "no current accepted medical use" through the Controlled Substance Act. Within eight years of this act, a program was established to provide select patients medical marijuana. The Compassionate Investigational New Drug Program is still operating today, but accepts no new patients.

Thirteen states have agreed and passed similar legislation. Nine others are considering a move in this direction. ■

I'm playing soccer now.



Bryce, a longtime patient of The Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida, is 11 years old and has suffered with Cystic Fibrosis his entire life. Now thanks to the care he's received, Bryce is getting stronger each day. For the first time, he's able to play on a soccer team — something he's always wanted to do.

Bryce's life is changing and we honor him for his amazing courage and spirit.

As the only Children's Hospital between Tampa and Miami, The Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida treats and heals infants and children from Lee, Collier, Hendry, Charlotte and Glades counties.

Please help us save a child's life, or return joy to one.

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