



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
**VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

*Chairman Phil Roe, M.D.*

**H.R. 5520: The Veterans Affairs Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2018**

**Background:**

The American Legion, a congressionally-chartered Veteran Service Organization, conducted a [survey](#) in October 2017 on a portion of its approximately 2.2 million veteran members and found that 92% of all respondents support medical research regarding medicinal cannabis and 82% of all respondents support legalizing medicinal cannabis. The survey also found that “22 percent of veterans are currently using cannabis to treat a medical condition.” Therefore, it is clear that medical research into the safety and efficacy of cannabis usage for medical purposes is timely, necessary, and widely supported by the veteran community.

Further, as so many veterans are currently using cannabis for medicinal purposes, it is important that clinicians are able to fully advise veterans on the potential impacts, harms, and benefits of cannabis use on those with various diagnoses including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and chronic pain.

The VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2018 would promote medical research into the safety and efficacy of medicinal cannabis usage on veterans diagnosed with PTSD, chronic pain and other illnesses and injuries by (1) specifically authorizing VA to conduct and support research regarding medicinal cannabis and (2) requiring VA to report to Congress on how it intends to exercise that authority. The VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2018 is a pragmatic and bipartisan piece of legislation that would advance our understanding of the impacts of medicinal marijuana usage and could improve the lives of veterans and other Americans.