



Rhode Island  
Patient Advocacy  
Coalition

37 Norfolk Rd  
Warwick, RI 02886  
[www.RIpatients.org](http://www.RIpatients.org)

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Contact:  
Nathaniel Lepp, 914.629.1335

## **2/3 of RI House Sponsors Medical Marijuana Act** *Half of the RI Senate Endorses Bill*

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - On Thursday, Rep. Tom Slater (D-Providence) and Sen. Rhoda Perry (D-Providence) introduced the Medical Marijuana Act into the Rhode Island General Assembly with the bipartisan support of 50 out of 75 Representatives and 18 out of 38 Senators. The Medical Marijuana Act would permit people suffering with cancer, AIDS, Multiple Sclerosis and other conditions to use and possess a limited amount of marijuana with the approval of their doctor and the RI Health Department. The bill has been introduced for several years, but has never experienced such dramatic support within the state legislature.

Support for the Medical Marijuana Act extends far beyond the Statehouse. The Rhode Island medical community has expressed strong support for the bill. Over 100 Rhode Island doctors have endorsed medical marijuana. In the past two years, the RI Medical Society, the RI State Nurses Association, AIDS Project RI, United Nurses and Allied Professionals, the American Association for Family Physicians, and the RI ACLU have all endorsed the bill. Additionally, a Zogby poll commissioned last year found that 69% of likely RI voters support the measure.

“Seriously ill Rhode Islanders should not fear arrest for using a doctor-recommended medication,” said Nathaniel Lepp, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Patient Advocacy Coalition (RIPAC). “With the tremendous amount of support this bill has – both within the General Assembly and in Rhode Island’s medical community – seriously ill patients should soon be able to use their medicine without fear of arrest.”

Rhode Island Patient Advocacy Coalition (RIPAC) is a broad-based, state-wide coalition of patients, doctors, organizations and individuals working to legally protect seriously ill Rhode Islanders who use marijuana with a recommendation from their doctors.

**Interviews are available** with Nathaniel Lepp, Rep. Tom Slater and Sen. Rhoda Perry, patients, and representatives from RIPAC member organizations.

For more information, contact Nathaniel Lepp at 914.629.1335 or [Nathaniel@RIpatients.org](mailto:Nathaniel@RIpatients.org).

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