

20 July 2020

MCIA welcomes new Parliamentary Friends of Medicinal Cannabis Group

Medicinal Cannabis Industry Australia (MCIA) is delighted to welcome the establishment of a Parliamentary Friends of Medicinal Cannabis Group in the Federal Parliament.

The group will provide a non-partisan forum for Members and Senators to meet with representatives of the Australian medicinal cannabis industry, medical experts and patient advocates to raise awareness of the applications of medicinal cannabis to Parliamentarians and within the broader community.

“The Australian government made medicinal cannabis legal in 2016 and established a regulatory framework through the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and Office of Drug Control (ODC) to ensure products for Australian patients are safe and effective,” said MCIA Chairman Peter Crock.

“This Group is an important forum for parliamentarians to learn about the benefits of medicinal cannabis and to further the growth of this important industry that has potential to positively contribute to health and economic outcomes for the community”.

MCIA welcomes the establishment of the Parliamentary Friends of Medicinal Cannabis Group and believes that it will play an important role in improving education and public awareness of medicinal cannabis across the community. “Improving the awareness and understanding of medicinal cannabis will help promote change in attitudes to medicinal cannabis, particularly amongst healthcare practitioners” said Mr Crock.

The Australian licensed sector will have significant capacity coming online over the next couple of years. This should see Australian patients being able to access Australian quality product in a timely and affordable manner. To achieve the shared outcomes of a sustainable industry that contributes to patient wellbeing and the economy, further progress in streamlining regulation, investment in education and providing patient subsidies is required. Mr Crock said “MCIA looks forward to the opportunity to engaging with this Group for the benefit of all Australians.”

The Parliamentary Friends of Medicinal Cannabis Group will be co-convened by two parliamentarians with medical backgrounds: Dr Mike Freeland MP and Dr Andrew Laming MP.

“This group ensures the Federal Parliament keeps a singular focus in facilitating the medicinal cannabis sector,” said Dr Laming MP.

“I look forward to engaging with parliamentary colleagues and health professionals to increase awareness of medicinal cannabis to Australians,” said Dr Laming.

“It is fantastic to see that we now have such broad support for medicinal cannabis in the Commonwealth Parliament,” said Dr Mike Freeland MP.

“We need to have a bipartisan approach for funding for research into the applications for medicinal cannabis and its efficacy in many conditions such as epilepsy, cancer medicine and neurological disorders.”

“This group will serve as a vessel to raise awareness about the applications and benefits of medicinal cannabis in our society,” said Dr Freeland.

More than 30 parliamentarians (attached) have expressed an active interest in supporting the group. It is anticipated that the first event to be held for the group will be later in the parliamentary sitting year (COVID-19 conditions permitting.)

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ABOUT MCIA:

MCIA is the peak industry organisation for Australia's licensed medicinal cannabis industry. This encompasses all activities of medicinal cannabis licence holders across research, cultivation and manufacturing and interaction with patients, the medical profession and communities.

MCIA's focus is on building an industry that enhances wellbeing through facilitating access to quality Australian medicinal cannabis products for Australian and global patients.

MCIA is providing stewardship for an economically sustainable and socially responsible industry that is trusted and valued by patients, the medical community and governments. The Australian industry and its products are built on sound science and underpinned by industry processes and standards that ensure patients, the medical community and governments have confidence in the sector and its products.

More information is available at: www.mcia.org.au

Parliamentary Friends of Medicinal Cannabis of the 46th Parliament

Name	Electorate/State
Dr Mike Freelander	Macarthur – Co-convenor
Dr Andrew Laming MP	Bowman – Co-convenor
Hon Sharon Bird MP	Cunningham
Josh Burns MP	Macnamara
Senator Carol Brown	Tasmania
Senator Catryna Bilyk	Tasmania
Brian Mitchell MP	Lyons
Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP	Hunter
Hon Warren Entsch MP	Leichardt
Hon Dr John McVeigh	Groom
Hon Dr Andrew Leigh	Fenner
Ross Vasta MP	Bonner
Ted O'Brien MP	Fairfax
Hon David Gillespie MP	Lyne
Hon Warren Snowdon MP	Lingiari
Senator Anne Urquhart	Tasmania
George Christensen MP	Dawson
Senator Malcolm Roberts	Queensland
Steve Georganas MP	Adelaide
Senator Helen Polley	Tasmania
Luke Gosling OAM MP	Solomon
Hon Chris Bowen MP	McMahon
Susan Templeman MP	Macquarie
Michelle Landry MP	Capricornia
Dr Helen Haines MP	Indi
Maria Vamvakinou MP	Calwell
Hon Damien Drum MP	Nicholls
Senator Louise Pratt	Western Australia
Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck	Tasmania