I wish I was able to be there today to share my story in person. I live in Cedar Falls. I am a mom of four and a home educator with a teaching degree from Iowa State University. Today I come to you as a voter, but also as a wife and aunt. My niece's story has gained media and public attention because Maggie Selmeski is a sweet two-year-old with epilepsy. Her family was able to move to Colorado to join a community of other special needs families who are finding that cannabis has medicinal value. I would like to give you an update on Maggie but my purpose is two-fold. I would also like to share my husband's story with you.

I've had a chance to visit Maggie since she started on cannabis oil last November. I wish that Maggie could visit family events in Iowa but instead we must travel to see her. She has definitely turned a corner in the healing process. She has been weaned off of three out of four of her heavily sedating prescriptions. And at the same time they have seen a 75% reduction in her seizures! Observationally, she is interacting with others, making intentional movements, eating more, and SMILING!! These are all things she was not doing in November. Though, in the past I was always skeptical that cannabis could be used as medicine. When looking at Maggie and many others, it is hard to deny that cannabis **does** have medicinal properties.

My education and experience give me expertise in the teaching field so I don't claim to understand the medicinal properties of this plant. But I would like you to give the doctors the right to treat and diagnose patients with this God given plant.

I understand there is another aspect of this plant, as there usually is. Anything, even meant for good, can be abused. My husband, Tyler Rice, understands this other aspect of cannabis. He completed a bachelor degree in Criminology at University of Northern Iowa. After graduating, he patiently waited a year to get his dream job at the Waterloo Police Department. As an officer, he worked up close and personal with the abuse of cannabis along with many other things in our culture. After 3 years working 2nd and 3rd shifts as a peace officer, Tyler had to immediately stop working because he suffered from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The PTSD was causing major gastrointestinal issues along with mental illness, that couldn't be seen. After an extensive medical board examination, Tyler was released with a life-time disability pension.

Though it seems like yesterday, he had to leave his dream job about 4 years ago. My once focus-driven husband, now is searching for something to relieve his daily symptoms. He has tried a variety of jobs and even moving to Missouri. Doctors have prescribed many different medications. Clonazepam is a commonly prescribed medication, highly addictive, and causes many side effects. For Tyler, he experienced reduced focus and reaction time. Two times while at work, Tyler had serious injuries while using clonazepam. His doctor has tried prescribing two other medications, both of which have left him unable to sleep at night. Currently he is taking another drug to help with the side effects of the first drug. It is my hope that someday his doctors will have the right to diagnose and treat him based on education and research with a medicine that has less side effects.

It's hard for Tyler to look past his policing experiences and see that marijuana ALSO has medicinal properties. As a bystander, I understand the skepticism but anyone can see that cannabis is relieving Maggie's symptoms. It is obvious that CANNABIS CAN BE USED AS MEDICINE IN THE RIGHT HANDS. It seems unfair that law abiding Iowans are not allowed the right to be prescribed a medicine to relieve their daily symptoms. Until you have been personally affected by one of these diseases you may not understand desperation in our voices.

Thank you for reading our story! Please feel free to contact me anytime!

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