



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Toby Ann Stavisky

Senators Stavisky, Stewart-Cousins Celebrate Win for Compassionate Care

[Toby Ann Stavisky](#)

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Albany, NY—Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Flushing) hailed the passage of the Compassionate Care Act on Friday. The legislation establishes the state’s first medical marijuana program and includes provisions to ensure that the drug is reserved only for patients with serious conditions to prevent abuse. The program will be effective in 18 months.

“Marijuana has proven to be a powerful treatment for patients suffering from debilitating and painful diseases such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and Lou Gehrig’s disease,” said **Senator Stavisky**. “I am hopeful that Compassionate Care Act will alleviate some the pain of thousands of patients while instituting appropriate safeguards to ensure the program cannot be abused.”

The bill passed by the State Legislature and supported by Governor Cuomo will:

- Establish a certification and registry process for physicians, patients and manufacturers to administer, obtain and dispense medical marijuana
- Specify that the serious conditions for which medical marijuana can be prescribed are cancer, HIV/AIDS, ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease), Parkinson’s Disease, multiple sclerosis, damage to the nervous tissue of the spinal cord with objective neurological indication on intractable spasticity, epilepsy, inflammatory bowel disease, neuropathies and Huntington’s Disease
- Establish a Class-E felony for a practitioner that falsely certifies an unqualified individual as eligible to facilitate the possession of medical marijuana and a misdemeanor offense for recipients of medical marijuana that sell or trade the medication

- Create a 7% excise tax on every sale of medical marijuana by a registered organization to a certified patient or designated caregiver.

“I am proud to join my legislative colleagues and Governor Cuomo to provide New Yorkers with access to medical marijuana to treat serious debilitating medical conditions. The Compassionate Care Act balances patients’ rights to modern treatment with public safety measures to prevent abuse. I am pleased we were able to give thousands of New Yorkers access to the medication they need to ease the debilitating symptoms of serious ailments,” **Senator Stavisky** concluded.