

2017 -- S 0176

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LC000436  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

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A N A C T

RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS - THE EDWARD O. HAWKINS AND THOMAS C.  
SLATER MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT

Introduced By: Senators Archambault, Satchell, Lombardo, McCaffrey, and Miller

Date Introduced: February 01, 2017

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 21-28.6-12 of the General Laws in Chapter 21-28.6 entitled "The  
2 Edward O. Hawkins and Thomas C. Slater Medical Marijuana Act" is hereby amended to read as  
3 follows:

4           **21-28.6-12. Compassion centers.**

5           (a) A compassion center registered under this section may acquire, possess, cultivate,  
6 manufacture, deliver, transfer, transport, supply, or dispense marijuana, or related supplies and  
7 educational materials, to registered qualifying patients and their registered primary caregivers or  
8 authorized purchasers. Except as specifically provided to the contrary, all provisions of the  
9 Edward O. Hawkins and Thomas C. Slater Medical Marijuana Act, §§ 21-28.6-1 -- 21-28.6-11,  
10 apply to a compassion center unless they conflict with a provision contained in § 21-28.6-12.

11           (b) Registration of compassion centers--authority of the departments of health and  
12 business regulation:

13           (1) Not later than ninety (90) days after the effective date of this chapter, the department  
14 of health shall promulgate regulations governing the manner in which it shall consider  
15 applications for registration certificates for compassion centers, including regulations governing:

16           (i) The form and content of registration and renewal applications;

17           (ii) Minimum oversight requirements for compassion centers;

18           (iii) Minimum record-keeping requirements for compassion centers;

1 (iv) Minimum security requirements for compassion centers; and

2 (v) Procedures for suspending, revoking, or terminating the registration of compassion  
3 centers that violate the provisions of this section or the regulations promulgated pursuant to this  
4 subsection.

5 (2) Within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this chapter, the department of health  
6 shall begin accepting applications for the operation of a single compassion center.

7 (3) Within one hundred fifty (150) days of the effective date of this chapter, the  
8 department of health shall provide for at least one public hearing on the granting of an application  
9 to a single compassion center.

10 (4) Within one hundred ninety (190) days of the effective date of this chapter, the  
11 department of health shall grant a single registration certificate to a single compassion center,  
12 providing at least one applicant has applied who meets the requirements of this chapter.

13 (5) If at any time after fifteen (15) months after the effective date of this chapter, there is  
14 no operational compassion center in Rhode Island, the department of health shall accept  
15 applications, provide for input from the public, and issue a registration certificate for a  
16 compassion center if a qualified applicant exists.

17 (6) Within two (2) years of the effective date of this chapter, the department of health  
18 shall begin accepting applications to provide registration certificates for two (2) additional  
19 compassion centers. The department shall solicit input from the public, and issue registration  
20 certificates if qualified applicants exist.

21 (7) (i) Any time a compassion center registration certificate is revoked, is relinquished, or  
22 expires on or before December 31, 2016, the department of health shall accept applications for a  
23 new compassion center.

24 (ii) Any time a compassion center registration certificate is revoked, is relinquished, or  
25 expires on or after January 1, 2017, the department of business regulation shall accept  
26 applications for a new compassion center.

27 (8) If at any time after ~~three (3) years after the effective date of this chapter and on or~~  
28 ~~before December 31, 2016,~~ January 1, 2017 fewer than ~~three (3)~~ six (6) compassion centers are  
29 holding valid registration certificates in Rhode Island, the department of health shall accept  
30 applications for a one or more new compassion ~~center~~ centers. ~~If at any time on or after January~~  
31 ~~1, 2017, fewer than three (3) compassion centers are holding valid registration certificates in~~  
32 ~~Rhode Island, the department of business regulation shall accept applications for a new~~  
33 ~~compassion center.~~ No more than ~~three (3)~~ six (6) compassion centers may hold valid registration  
34 certificates at one time. Any new compassion centers approved by the department after January 1,

1 2017, shall be disbursed geographically, to be located in Providence, Bristol, Newport, or  
2 Washington counties, with no more than one new compassion center in each county.

3 (9) Any compassion center application selected for approval by the department of health  
4 on or before December 31, 2016, or selected for approval by the department of business  
5 regulation on or after January 1, 2017, shall remain in full force and effect, notwithstanding any  
6 provisions of this chapter to the contrary, and shall be subject to state law adopted herein and  
7 rules and regulations adopted by the departments of health and business regulation subsequent to  
8 passage of this legislation.

9 (c) Compassion center and agent applications and registration:

10 (1) Each application for a compassion center shall include:

11 (i) A non-refundable application fee paid to the department in the amount of two hundred  
12 fifty dollars (\$250);

13 (ii) The proposed legal name and proposed articles of incorporation of the compassion  
14 center;

15 (iii) The proposed physical address of the compassion center, if a precise address has  
16 been determined, or, if not, the general location where it would be located. This may include a  
17 second location for the cultivation of medical marijuana;

18 (iv) A description of the enclosed, locked facility that would be used in the cultivation of  
19 marijuana;

20 (v) The name, address, and date of birth of each principal officer and board member of  
21 the compassion center;

22 (vi) Proposed security and safety measures that shall include at least one security alarm  
23 system for each location, planned measures to deter and prevent the unauthorized entrance into  
24 areas containing marijuana and the theft of marijuana, as well as a draft, employee-instruction  
25 manual including security policies, safety and security procedures, personal safety, and crime-  
26 prevention techniques; and

27 (vii) Proposed procedures to ensure accurate record keeping;

28 (2) (i) For applications submitted on or before December 31, 2016, any time one or more  
29 compassion center registration applications are being considered, the department of health shall  
30 also allow for comment by the public and shall solicit input from registered qualifying patients,  
31 registered primary caregivers; and the towns or cities where the applicants would be located;

32 (ii) For applications submitted on or after January 1, 2017, any time one or more  
33 compassion center registration applications are being considered, the department of business  
34 regulation shall also allow for comment by the public and shall solicit input from registered

1 qualifying patients, registered primary caregivers; and the towns or cities where the applicants  
2 would be located.

3 (3) Each time a compassion center certificate is granted, the decision shall be based upon  
4 the overall health needs of qualified patients and the safety of the public, including, but not  
5 limited to, the following factors:

6 (i) Convenience to patients from throughout the state of Rhode Island to the compassion  
7 centers if the applicant were approved;

8 (ii) The applicant's ability to provide a steady supply to the registered qualifying patients  
9 in the state;

10 (iii) The applicant's experience running a non-profit or business;

11 (iv) The interests of qualifying patients regarding which applicant be granted a  
12 registration certificate;

13 (v) The interests of the city or town where the dispensary would be located;

14 (vi) The sufficiency of the applicant's plans for record keeping and security, which  
15 records shall be considered confidential health-care information under Rhode Island law and are  
16 intended to be deemed protected health-care information for purposes of the Federal Health  
17 Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, as amended; and

18 (vii) The sufficiency of the applicant's plans for safety and security, including proposed  
19 location, security devices employed, and staffing;

20 (4) A compassion center approved by the department of health on or before December  
21 31, 2016, shall submit the following to the department before it may begin operations:

22 (i) A fee paid to the department in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000);

23 (ii) The legal name and articles of incorporation of the compassion center;

24 (iii) The physical address of the compassion center; this may include a second address for  
25 the secure cultivation of marijuana;

26 (iv) The name, address, and date of birth of each principal officer and board member of  
27 the compassion center; and

28 (v) The name, address, and date of birth of any person who will be an agent of, employee,  
29 or volunteer of the compassion center at its inception.

30 (5) A compassion center approved by the department of business regulation on or after  
31 January 1, 2017, shall submit the following to the department before it may begin operations:

32 (i) A fee paid to the department in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000);

33 (ii) The legal name and articles of incorporation of the compassion center;

34 (iii) The physical address of the compassion center; this may include a second address for

1 the secure cultivation of marijuana;

2 (iv) The name, address, and date of birth of each principal officer and board member of  
3 the compassion center;

4 (v) The name, address, and date of birth of any person who will be an agent of, employee,  
5 or volunteer of the compassion center at its inception.

6 (6) Except as provided in subdivision (7), the department of health or the department of  
7 business regulation shall issue each principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, and  
8 employee of a compassion center a registry identification card or renewal card after receipt of the  
9 person's name, address, date of birth; a fee in an amount established by the department of health  
10 or the department business regulation; and notification to the department of health or the  
11 department of business regulation by the department of public safety division of state police that  
12 the registry identification card applicant has not been convicted of a felony drug offense or has  
13 not entered a plea of nolo contendere for a felony drug offense and received a sentence of  
14 probation. Each card shall specify that the cardholder is a principal officer, board member, agent,  
15 volunteer, or employee of a compassion center and shall contain the following:

16 (i) The name, address, and date of birth of the principal officer, board member, agent,  
17 volunteer, or employee;

18 (ii) The legal name of the compassion center to which the principal officer, board  
19 member, agent, volunteer, or employee is affiliated;

20 (iii) A random identification number that is unique to the cardholder;

21 (iv) The date of issuance and expiration date of the registry identification card; and

22 (v) A photograph, if the department of health or the department of business regulation  
23 decides to require one.

24 (7) Except as provided in this subsection, neither the department of health nor the  
25 department of business regulation shall issue a registry identification card to any principal officer,  
26 board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of a compassion center who has been convicted of a  
27 felony drug offense or has entered a plea of nolo contendere for a felony drug offense and  
28 received a sentence of probation. If a registry identification card is denied, the compassion center  
29 will be notified in writing of the purpose for denying the registry identification card. A registry  
30 identification card may be granted if the offense was for conduct that occurred prior to the  
31 enactment of the Edward O. Hawkins and Thomas C. Slater Medical Marijuana Act or that was  
32 prosecuted by an authority other than the state of Rhode Island and for which the Edward O.  
33 Hawkins and Thomas C. Slater Medical Marijuana Act would otherwise have prevented a  
34 conviction.

1 (i) All registry identification card applicants shall apply to the department of public safety  
2 division of state police for a national criminal identification records check that shall include  
3 fingerprints submitted to the federal bureau of investigation. Upon the discovery of a felony drug  
4 offense conviction or a plea of nolo contendere for a felony drug offense with a sentence of  
5 probation, and in accordance with the rules promulgated by the department of health and the  
6 department of business regulation, the department of public safety division of state police shall  
7 inform the applicant, in writing, of the nature of the felony and the department of public safety  
8 division of state police shall notify the department of health or the department of business  
9 regulation, in writing, without disclosing the nature of the felony, that a felony drug offense  
10 conviction or a plea of nolo contendere for a felony drug offense with probation has been found.

11 (ii) In those situations in which no felony drug offense conviction or plea of nolo  
12 contendere for a felony drug offense with probation has been found, the department of public  
13 safety division of state police shall inform the applicant and the department of health or the  
14 department of business regulation, in writing, of this fact.

15 (iii) All registry identification card applicants shall be responsible for any expense  
16 associated with the criminal background check with fingerprints.

17 (8) A registry identification card of a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer,  
18 or employee shall expire one year after its issuance, or upon the expiration of the registered  
19 organization's registration certificate, or upon the termination of the principal officer, board  
20 member, agent, volunteer or employee's relationship with the compassion center, whichever  
21 occurs first.

22 (9) A compassion center cardholder shall notify and request approval from the  
23 department of business regulation of any change in his or her name or address within ten (10)  
24 days of such change. A compassion center cardholder who fails to notify the department of  
25 business regulation of any of these changes is responsible for a civil infraction, punishable by a  
26 fine of no more than one hundred fifty dollars (\$150).

27 (10) When a compassion center cardholder notifies the department of health or the  
28 department of business regulation of any changes listed in this subsection, the department shall  
29 issue the cardholder a new registry identification card within ten (10) days of receiving the  
30 updated information and a ten-dollar (\$10.00) fee.

31 (11) If a compassion center cardholder loses his or her registry identification card, he or  
32 she shall notify the department of health or the department of business regulation and submit a ten  
33 dollar (\$10.00) fee within ten (10) days of losing the card. Within five (5) days, the department  
34 shall issue a new registry identification card with new random identification number.

1 (12) On or before December 31, 2016, a compassion center cardholder shall notify the  
2 department of health of any disqualifying criminal convictions as defined in subdivision (c)(7).  
3 The department of health may choose to suspend and/or revoke his or her registry identification  
4 card after such notification.

5 (13) On or after January 1, 2017, a compassion center cardholder shall notify the  
6 department of business regulation of any disqualifying criminal convictions as defined in  
7 subdivision (c)(7). The department of business regulation may choose to suspend and/or revoke  
8 his or her registry identification card after such notification.

9 (14) If a compassion center cardholder violates any provision of this chapter or  
10 regulations promulgated hereunder as determined by the departments of health and business  
11 regulation, his or her registry identification card may be suspended and/or revoked.

12 (d) Expiration or termination of compassion center:

13 (1) On or before December 31, 2016, a compassion center's registration shall expire two  
14 (2) years after its registration certificate is issued. On or after January 1, 2017, a compassion  
15 center's registration shall expire one year after its registration certificate is issued. The  
16 compassion center may submit a renewal application beginning sixty (60) days prior to the  
17 expiration of its registration certificate;

18 (2) The department of health or the department of business regulation shall grant a  
19 compassion center's renewal application within thirty (30) days of its submission if the following  
20 conditions are all satisfied:

21 (i) The compassion center submits the materials required under subdivisions (c)(4) and  
22 (c)(5), including a five thousand dollar (\$5,000) fee;

23 (ii) The compassion center's registration has never been suspended for violations of this  
24 chapter or regulations issued pursuant to this chapter; and

25 (iii) The department of health and the department of business regulation find that the  
26 compassion center is adequately providing patients with access to medical marijuana at  
27 reasonable rates;

28 (3) If the department of health or the department of business regulation determines that  
29 any of the conditions listed in paragraphs (d)(2)(i) -- (iii) have not been met, the department shall  
30 begin an open application process for the operation of a compassion center. In granting a new  
31 registration certificate, the department of health or the department of business regulation shall  
32 consider factors listed in subdivision (c)(3);

33 (4) The department of health or the department of business regulation shall issue a  
34 compassion center one or more thirty-day (30) temporary registration certificates after that

1 compassion center's registration would otherwise expire if the following conditions are all  
2 satisfied:

3 (i) The compassion center previously applied for a renewal, but the department had not  
4 yet come to a decision;

5 (ii) The compassion center requested a temporary registration certificate; and

6 (iii) The compassion center has not had its registration certificate revoked due to  
7 violations of this chapter or regulations issued pursuant to this chapter.

8 (5) A compassion center's registry identification card shall be subject to revocation if the  
9 compassion center:

10 (i) Possesses an amount of marijuana exceeding the limits established by this chapter;

11 (ii) Is in violation of the laws of this state;

12 (iii) Is in violation of other departmental regulations; or

13 (iv) Employs or enters into a business relationship with a medical practitioner who  
14 provides written certification of a qualifying patient's medical condition.

15 (e) Inspection. Compassion centers are subject to reasonable inspection by the department  
16 of health, division of facilities regulation and the department of business regulation. During an  
17 inspection, the departments may review the compassion center's confidential records, including  
18 its dispensing records, which shall track transactions according to qualifying patients' registry  
19 identification numbers to protect their confidentiality.

20 (f) Compassion center requirements:

21 (1) A compassion center shall be operated on a not-for-profit basis for the mutual benefit  
22 of its patients. A compassion center need not be recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the  
23 Internal Revenue Service;

24 (2) A compassion center may not be located within one thousand feet (1000') of the  
25 property line of a preexisting public or private school;

26 (3) On or before December 31, 2016, a compassion center shall notify the department of  
27 health within ten (10) days of when a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or  
28 employee ceases to work at the compassion center. On or after January 1, 2017, a compassion  
29 center shall notify the department of business regulation within ten (10) days of when a principal  
30 officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee ceases to work at the compassion center.  
31 His or her card shall be deemed null and void and the person shall be liable for any penalties that  
32 may apply to any nonmedical possession or use of marijuana by the person;

33 (4) (i) On or before December 31, 2016, a compassion center shall notify the department  
34 of health in writing of the name, address, and date of birth of any new principal officer, board



1 member, agent, volunteer or employee and shall submit a fee in an amount established by the  
2 department for a new registry identification card before that person begins his or her relationship  
3 with the compassion center;

4 (ii) On or after January 1, 2017, a compassion center shall notify the department of  
5 business regulation, in writing, of the name, address, and date of birth of any new principal  
6 officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee and shall submit a fee in an amount  
7 established by the department for a new registry identification card before that person begins his  
8 or her relationship with the compassion center;

9 (5) A compassion center shall implement appropriate security measures to deter and  
10 prevent the unauthorized entrance into areas containing marijuana and the theft of marijuana and  
11 shall insure that each location has an operational security alarm system. Each compassion center  
12 shall request that the department of public safety division of state police visit the compassion  
13 center to inspect the security of the facility and make any recommendations regarding the security  
14 of the facility and its personnel within ten (10) days prior to the initial opening of each  
15 compassion center. Said recommendations shall not be binding upon any compassion center, nor  
16 shall the lack of implementation of said recommendations delay or prevent the opening or  
17 operation of any center. If the department of public safety division of state police does not inspect  
18 the compassion center within the ten-day (10) period, there shall be no delay in the compassion  
19 center's opening.

20 (6) The operating documents of a compassion center shall include procedures for the  
21 oversight of the compassion center and procedures to ensure accurate record keeping.

22 (7) A compassion center is prohibited from acquiring, possessing, cultivating,  
23 manufacturing, delivering, transferring, transporting, supplying, or dispensing marijuana for any  
24 purpose except to assist registered qualifying patients with the medical use of marijuana directly  
25 or through the qualifying patient's primary caregiver or authorized purchaser.

26 (8) All principal officers and board members of a compassion center must be residents of  
27 the state of Rhode Island.

28 (9) Each time a new, registered, qualifying patient visits a compassion center, it shall  
29 provide the patient with a frequently asked questions sheet, designed by the department, that  
30 explains the limitations on the right to use medical marijuana under state law.

31 (10) Effective July 1, 2016, each compassion center shall be subject to any regulations  
32 promulgated by the department of health that specify how usable marijuana must be tested for  
33 items included but not limited to cannabinoid profile and contaminants.

34 (11) Effective January 1, 2017, each compassion center shall be subject to any product

1 labeling requirements promulgated by the department of business regulation.

2 (12) Each compassion center shall develop, implement, and maintain on the premises  
3 employee, volunteer, and agent policies and procedures to address the following requirements:

4 (i) A job description or employment contract developed for all employees and agents, and  
5 a volunteer agreement for all volunteers, that includes duties, authority, responsibilities,  
6 qualifications, and supervision; and

7 (ii) Training in, and adherence to, state confidentiality laws.

8 (13) Each compassion center shall maintain a personnel record for each employee, agent,  
9 and volunteer that includes an application and a record of any disciplinary action taken.

10 (14) Each compassion center shall develop, implement, and maintain on the premises an  
11 on-site training curriculum, or enter into contractual relationships with outside resources capable  
12 of meeting employee training needs, that includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:

13 (i) Professional conduct, ethics, and patient confidentiality; and

14 (ii) Informational developments in the field of medical use of marijuana.

15 (15) Each compassion center entity shall provide each employee, agent, and volunteer, at  
16 the time of his or her initial appointment, training in the following:

17 (i) The proper use of security measures and controls that have been adopted; and

18 (ii) Specific procedural instructions on how to respond to an emergency, including  
19 robbery or violent accident.

20 (16) All compassion centers shall prepare training documentation for each employee and  
21 volunteer and have employees and volunteers sign a statement indicating the date, time, and place  
22 the employee and volunteer received said training and topics discussed, to include name and title  
23 of presenters. The compassion center shall maintain documentation of an employee's and a  
24 volunteer's training for a period of at least six (6) months after termination of an employee's  
25 employment or the volunteer's volunteering.

26 (g) Maximum amount of usable marijuana to be dispensed:

27 (1) A compassion center or principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or  
28 employee of a compassion center may not dispense more than two and one half ounces (2.5 oz.)  
29 of usable marijuana, or its equivalent, to a qualifying patient directly or through a qualifying  
30 patient's primary caregiver or authorized purchaser during a fifteen-day (15) period;

31 (2) A compassion center or principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or  
32 employee of a compassion center may not dispense an amount of usable marijuana, or its  
33 equivalent, seedlings, or mature marijuana plants, to a qualifying patient, a qualifying patient's  
34 primary caregiver, or a qualifying patient's authorized purchaser that the compassion center,

1 principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee knows would cause the recipient  
2 to possess more marijuana than is permitted under the Edward O. Hawkins and Thomas C. Slater  
3 Medical Marijuana Act.

4 (3) Compassion centers shall utilize a database administered by the departments of health  
5 and business regulation. The database shall contains all compassion centers' transactions  
6 according to qualifying patients', authorized purchasers', and primary caregivers', registry  
7 identification numbers to protect the confidentiality of patient personal and medical information.  
8 Compassion centers will not have access to any applications or supporting information submitted  
9 by qualifying patients, authorized purchasers or primary caregivers. Before dispensing marijuana  
10 to any patient or authorized purchaser, the compassion center must utilize the database to ensure  
11 that a qualifying patient is not dispensed more than two and one half ounces (2.5 oz.) of usable  
12 marijuana or its equivalent directly or through the qualifying patient's primary caregiver or  
13 authorized purchaser during a fifteen-day (15) period.

14 (h) Immunity:

15 (1) No registered compassion center shall be subject to prosecution; search, except by the  
16 departments pursuant to subsection (e); seizure; or penalty in any manner, or denied any right or  
17 privilege, including, but not limited to, civil penalty or disciplinary action by a business,  
18 occupational, or professional licensing board or entity, solely for acting in accordance with this  
19 section to assist registered qualifying patients.

20 (2) No registered compassion center shall be subject to prosecution, seizure, or penalty in  
21 any manner, or denied any right or privilege, including, but not limited to, civil penalty or  
22 disciplinary action, by a business, occupational, or professional licensing board or entity, for  
23 selling, giving, or distributing marijuana in whatever form, and within the limits established by,  
24 the department of health or the department of business regulation to another registered  
25 compassion center.

26 (3) No principal officers, board members, agents, volunteers, or employees of a registered  
27 compassion center shall be subject to arrest, prosecution, search, seizure, or penalty in any  
28 manner, or denied any right or privilege, including, but not limited to, civil penalty or disciplinary  
29 action by a business, occupational, or professional licensing board or entity, solely for working  
30 for or with a compassion center to engage in acts permitted by this section.

31 (4) No state employee shall be subject to arrest, prosecution or penalty in any manner, or  
32 denied any right or privilege, including, but not limited to, civil penalty, disciplinary action,  
33 termination, or loss of employee or pension benefits, for any and all conduct that occurs within  
34 the scope of his or her employment regarding the administration, execution and/or enforcement of

1 this act, and the provisions of §§ 9-31-8 and 9-31-9 shall be applicable to this section.

2 (i) Prohibitions:

3 (1) A compassion center must limit its inventory of seedlings, plants, and usable  
4 marijuana to reflect the projected needs of qualifying patients;

5 (2) A compassion center may not dispense, deliver, or otherwise transfer marijuana to a  
6 person other than a qualifying patient or to such patient's primary caregiver or authorized  
7 purchaser;

8 (3) A person found to have violated paragraph (2) of this subsection may not be an  
9 employee, agent, volunteer, principal officer, or board member of any compassion center;

10 (4) An employee, agent, volunteer, principal officer or board member of any compassion  
11 center found in violation of paragraph (2) shall have his or her registry identification revoked  
12 immediately; and

13 (5) No person who has been convicted of a felony drug offense or has entered a plea of  
14 nolo contendere for a felony drug offense with a sentence or probation may be the principal  
15 officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of a compassion center unless the  
16 department has determined that the person's conviction was for the medical use of marijuana or  
17 assisting with the medical use of marijuana in accordance with the terms and conditions of this  
18 chapter. A person who is employed by or is an agent, volunteer, principal officer, or board  
19 member of a compassion center in violation of this section is guilty of a civil violation punishable  
20 by a fine of up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000). A subsequent violation of this section is a  
21 misdemeanor.

22 (j) Legislative oversight committee:

23 (1) The general assembly shall appoint a nine-member (9) oversight committee  
24 comprised of: one member of the house of representatives; one member of the senate; one  
25 physician to be selected from a list provided by the Rhode Island medical society; one nurse to be  
26 selected from a list provided by the Rhode Island state nurses association; two (2) registered  
27 qualifying patients; one registered primary caregiver; one patient advocate to be selected from a  
28 list provided by the Rhode Island patient advocacy coalition; and the superintendent of the  
29 department of public safety, or his/her designee.

30 (2) The oversight committee shall meet at least six (6) times per year for the purpose of  
31 evaluating and making recommendations to the general assembly regarding:

32 (i) Patients' access to medical marijuana;

33 (ii) Efficacy of compassion centers;

34 (iii) Physician participation in the Medical Marijuana Program;

- 1 (iv) The definition of qualifying medical condition; and
- 2 (v) Research studies regarding health effects of medical marijuana for patients.
- 3 (3) On or before January 1 of every even numbered year, the oversight committee shall
- 4 report to the general assembly on its findings.
- 5 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS - THE EDWARD O. HAWKINS AND THOMAS C.  
SLATER MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT

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1           This act would increase the number of permits for medical marijuana compassion centers  
2 from three (3) to six (6). The additional compassion centers would be approved by the department  
3 of health, with no more than one of each additional compassion center to be located in  
4 Providence, Bristol, Newport, or Washington counties.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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