In 2006, my son in college reviled to us he was smoking marijuana. We told him we didn't want him to smoke for a variety of reasons but like many parents didn't realize at the time how potent the drug had become... it was 'just' marijuana. The next year we brought him home with a severe addiction to OxyContin. During his recovery he told me the first time he took a pill and I quote, "I loved it". My heart sank. This is not the normal reaction when someone takes an opiate, but marijuana had primed his brain to enjoy the rush of stronger drugs.

Yes, amendment 2 passed but the reality is 40% of eligible voters voted yes which is not an overwhelming majority. Voters were misled and lied to. (Placing a label on a bag of pot does not make it a medicine.) Hardly a week goes by that I don't correct someone telling them medical marijuana is not an FDA approved medication and certainly not a Rx. Never once in 2 ½ years has anyone ever been upset or confused that smoking was not allowed.

I recently finished reading an excellent book "Tell your children the truth about marijuana, mental illness and violence." It outlines the link between marijuana and the increase in ER psychotic admissions, suicide rates, violence, crime, car crashed and opioid overdoses. I think the book should be titled, "Tell your elected officials the truth about marijuana". The decisions you make this session will impact our children and families immensely.

A thought-provoking quote in the book was marijuana's consequences are "hidden in plain sight." For example:

- In Polk county a few years ago one friend beat his buddy to death with a bat… they had been lifelong friends who shortly before had smoked 'just' marijuana together.
- Do you remember the man ate another man's face in Miami. Speculations that it was bath salts or LSD but toxicology results concluded marijuana was the only drug found in his system 'just marijuana'

In Hillsborough county, Marijuana is the # 1 drug used by high school students surpassing alcohol this year. This is not going to help our graduation rates nor future employment rates. Teens are getting the wrong message and legalizing smoked marijuana as a medicine will make a growing problem worse.

Marijuana is no longer a gateway drug; 'just marijuana' has become a highly addictive often psychotic life-altering drug.

Please think long and hard, how it will be possible to make a joint look like medicine to avoid confusion from a street drug. And, to prevent abuse and aide our first responders these differences must be obvious and easy to identify.

Addiction is a terrible, preventable disease, it is nonpartisan that strikes every race, religion and sadly almost every family today. This is a pro-life issue. My mission is to be the messenger of truth. As elected officials your mission is to protect our

children and families. Please make this part of your consideration as you proceed to draft this bill and do the right thing.

I want Florida to continue to be a family- friendly vacation haven for everyone not a ‘safe place’ for the marijuana industry.

“If marijuana use prevents opioid use, why are overdose deaths centered in the two industrial countries with the highest rates of cannabis use? Why have they doubled in the decade since marijuana use took off in the United States and Canada?” *