Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf the American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL), we write to urge you to advance S. 253, the Cannabidiol and Marihuana Research Expansion Act, which would improve the process for conducting scientific and clinical research on cannabidiol (CBD) and marijuana, and streamline the development of safe and effective cannabinoid-based drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The bill led by Senators Dianne Feinstein, Chuck Grassley, and Brian Schatz passed the Senate unanimously in March 2022.

ACIL is a trade association representing independent, commercial scientific and engineering firms with over 1,000 facilities in the United States engaged in testing, product certification, consulting, and research and development to enhance public health and safety.

Marijuana and its compound cannabinoids, in particular CBD, show promise for treating a wide-range of diseases and disorders. However, there is a lack of research evaluating the potential medical benefits of marijuana because of barriers in federal law. As a result, many are using marijuana-derived products to treat serious illnesses that have not been approved by the FDA, and therefore have little information about their potential interactions with other medications, or the appropriate dose or delivery mechanism.

To that end, the Cannabidiol and Marihuana Research Expansion Act would make it easier for researchers to conduct scientifically valid and well-controlled clinical trials under federal investigational new drug applications, which are necessary to assess the safety and effectiveness of all new drugs, including potential cannabis products for medical use. The bill would also expand sources of research-grade marihuana, including by allowing marijuana producers who supply marijuana for state-approved programs to apply for research manufacturing licenses and provide the same marijuana to researchers in a controlled and scientifically sound process. Furthermore, in the event that the research identifies the potential for an FDA-approved medicine, the bill would create a process for the development of such drugs.

Medical treatments should be based on sound science, and those who are sick deserve safe medications that have been proven effective. We urge the House of Representatives to facilitate and support robust research on marijuana by advancing the Cannabidiol and Marihuana Research Expansion Act.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Richard Bright
Chief Operating Officer