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Supporters Outnumber Opponents at Medical Marijuana Hearing in Iowa City

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Making an illegal drug legal for medical purposes brought an opinionated group together in Iowa City today. The issue is medical marijuana.

Supporters outnumbered opponents today as the Iowa Pharmacy Board held the third of four public hearings on it.

Standing in front of strangers, Lisa Jackson talked about her four year struggle to control her fibromyalgia

"There were times I had 10 to 12 medications on my dresser, sometimes take multiple doses a day," said Jackson.

None of the meds worked. This mother of four says she found the most effective cure for her chronic pain disorder about two years ago.

"If I smoke marijuana and keep the THC in my system, I can keep everything under control," said Jackson.

Jackson hopes sharing her story helps the Iowa Pharmacy Board understand what she calls the medical benefits of marijuana.

"You don't get high. It gives me the ability to get up, gives me ability to function, that's all it does."

Substance abuse counselor Jennifer Husmann stood on the stage for a different reason. She says next to alcohol, she sees more teenagers recreationally using marijuana.

"I feel strongly that moving in the direction of medical marijuana bring increased access to youth. I work with youth, and I am concerned about the effects of marijuana on youth," said Husmann.

State pharmacy experts can hear the pros from people like Jackson and the cons from those like Husmann.

Iowa lawmakers ultimately pick which side wins the argument over medical marijuana.

As of today, 13 states allow the use of marijuana for medical treatments. Even in those states, though, it's still a federal crime as federal law declares all use of marijuana illegal.