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WHO

Medical Marijuana and Iowa Law

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Reporter

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Carl Olsen has never been shy about his feelings towards marijuana.

"This is something that's a civil rights issue," Olsen says.

When he met a man at the capitol in 1990, his fight to legalize the controlled substance took a big step forward.

"I met a medical user there, George McMahon, who is a plaintiff in this case and he had gotten a license to use marijuana. He was smoking at the capitol and I said 'Aren't you afraid of getting arrested?' and he said 'I have a federal license; I'm legal to smoke marijuana.'

I thought this guy won, here's the living proof right here in front of me," Olsen says.

Six years later California voters approved the Compassionate Act which allowed the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. Since then twelve others states have passed similar laws. This past April a Polk County judge ordered the Iowa Board of Pharmacy to review if the drug is misclassified in Iowa.

Monday the board discussed the issue at a public hearing.

"I think that was not addressed appropriately throughout the court," says pharmacist and IBP board member Susan Frey.

"The fact that the other states have done this does not mean Iowa has to follow suit," says pharmacist and IBP board member Edward Maier.

"If all your friends jumped of a bridge does that mean you should jump off too?" says pharmacist and IBP board member Deeann Wedemeyer-Olesen.

Despite the board's comments, Olsen is unfazed.

"It always helps when you're on the right side of the issue to have them on the wrong side and have them look vigorously mean and bad. The board effectively did that today and I would like to thank



them for doing that," says Olsen.

He promises to continue his fight.

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