

# PCC MONTH IN REVIEW

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



PCC Members,

Thanks to everyone who attended our Third Quarter Membership Meeting at the beginning of the month. Please save the date for our Fourth Quarter Meeting on Friday, December 2, 2022. We hope to be joined by a representative from DOH to discuss the program. Stay tuned for more information.

The Pennsylvania Legislature only has a few session days left prior to election day. While we unfortunately don't anticipate any movement on 280E, Senator Bartolotta's bill - SB 167 - Removal of DUI Penalties for Legal Medical Cannabis Use remains on the legislative calendar. Please take a moment to call the legislators who represent your facilities and urge them to support SB 167 on behalf of Pennsylvania's patients. We will announce any movement on the bill via a PCC Advocacy Alert. Learn more about Senator Bartolotta on page six.

We are excited to welcome Laura Mentch as the new director of the medical marijuana program. PCC's Executive Committee and I have had a chance to meet Director Mentch and are optimistic about her outlook on the role. Her view of operators as the programs customers is a welcome change that we hope will facilitate further collaboration and increased program transparency. See page two to learn more about Director Mentch.

The Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) will consider the final program regulations at their October 20, 2022 meeting. At the meeting IRRC will approve or disapprove the regulatory package as a whole. No further changes can be made at this time. We encourage you to submit comments in order to preserve the concerns for both IRRC and the committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate. A link to the final regulations is included on page two of the newsletter.

Please be in touch with any questions.

  
Meredith Buettner, Executive Director

PENNSYLVANIA CANNABIS COALITION  
P.O. BOX 11501 | HARRISBURG, PA 17108  
717-220-3508 | WWW.PCANNA.ORG

## FINAL PROGRAM REGULATIONS

The Department of Health submitted the final form medical marijuana regulations (#10-219) to the designated Standing Committees of the General Assembly and to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) on September 19, 2022.

Section 5.1(j) of the Act (71 P.S. § 745.a(j)) permits the submission of public comments to IRRC up to 48 hours prior to IRRC's public meeting on the regulations. IRRC will consider the regulations at its October 20, 2022 meeting.

Your feedback on the regulations is appreciated. PCC will submit comments regarding the regulations to the designated standing committees as well as IRRC.

[Link to Final Form Medical Marijuana Regulations \(#10-219\)](#)

---

### LAURA MENTCH, DIRECTOR - OFFICE OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA

PCC welcomes new program director Laura Mentch. Laura is currently a registered pharmacist in the state of Pennsylvania, a certified medical marijuana pharmacist and APhA certified immunization pharmacist. She has had an extensive career in hospital pharmacy, both clinically and administratively, before pivoting into dispensary work. Laura obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, as well as a Master of Business Administration from the University of Scranton. She is certified from the Lambert Center at Thomas Jefferson University for Medicinal Cannabis/ Education for Health Care Providers. Laura resides in Danville and has a 15-year-old daughter who plays soccer and is a second-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do.

---

### General Assembly Fall Legislative Calendar

#### House of Representatives Session Days

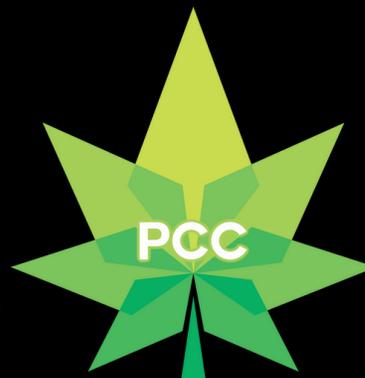
October 24, 25, 25

November 14, 15, 16

#### Senate Session Days

October 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 25

November 15





**Program Data to Date**

- 816,772 Patients and Caregivers Registered
- 417,708 Active Patient Certifications
- 1,849 Approved Practitioners
- 24.7 Million Patients Dispensing Events
- 70.5 Million Products Dispensed
- \$6 Billion in Total Sales
  - \$2.4 Billion by GPs to Dispensaries
  - \$3.6 Billion by Dispensaries

\*From September 27, 2022 MMAB Presentation

<b>Q3 2021 v. Sept. 2022</b>		
	<b>Q3 2021</b>	<b>Sept. 2022</b>
<b>Active Patients Certificates</b>	367,925	417,708
<b>Approved Practitioners</b>	1,603	1,849
<b>Dispensing Events</b>	14.1M	23.3M
<b>Products Dispensed</b>	40.4M	70.5M
<b>Total Sales</b>	3.4B	6B
<b>G/Ps to Dispensaries</b>	1.4B	2.4B
<b>Dispensaries to Patients</b>	2B	3.6B
<b>Operational Dispensaries</b>	129	165
<b>Retail Price per Gram</b>	\$14.53	\$11.24
<b>Wholesale Price per Gram</b>	\$9.48	\$3.63

**REMEDICATION UPDATE**

During the September 27, 2022 Medical Marijuana Advisory Board Meeting the Board's Medical Research Subcommittee gave their initial findings related to the remediation research initiative conducted by Organic Remedies and their Academic Clinical Research Center Partner- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

The Medical Research Subcommittee shared that they are inclined to recommend remediation be permitted in the program. They are seeking further information about the study and remediation in general. The next step is for the subcommittee to submit a formal recommendation to the Secretary of Health. We will continue to support Organic Remedies and PCOM in their research initiative in hopes of implementing remediation in the near future.

## **Capitolwire: Medical marijuana advisory board members raise questions about efforts to lower prices for patients.**

**By John Finnerty - Capitolwire.com Bureau Chief**

HARRISBURG (Sept. 27) – Members of the state's Medical Marijuana Advisory Board had pointed questions about the program's efforts to get lower prices for patients and ensure that patients have access to health care professionals to properly advise them about what forms and doses of the drug they should be taking.

Those questions largely went unanswered Tuesday.

Department of Health officials have been acknowledging since early this year that prices paid by dispensaries to growers have been dropping faster than the prices paid by patients in dispensaries.

That trend continued through August, according to data shared by DOH at the Medical Marijuana Advisory Board meeting. Since January, the wholesale price of dry leaf marijuana has dropped from \$10.65 per gram to \$3.63 per gram. The retail price charged in dispensaries has dropped as well, but not nearly as dramatically – going from \$14.90 a gram in January to \$11.24 a gram. For comparison, the wholesale price has dropped almost 66% while the retail price has dropped 25%.

Former medical marijuana program director John Collins, identified the disparity in the price declines before he departed in March. Since then, the department noted that the trends have been continuing without offering any suggestion as to what will be done to close the gap.

Tuesday, Dr. I. William Goldfarb, asked what the department's strategy for addressing the disparity is.

DOH Executive Secretary Pete Blank, who'd served as interim director since Collins' departure said he'd like to discuss the matter with the Medical Marijuana program's new director Laura Mentch, who started earlier this month.

Board members also asked about the status of the program's plan to provide financial assistance to low-income medical marijuana patients.

Almost a quarter of medical marijuana patients qualify for financial assistance. The initial phases of the financial assistance program included waiving the cost of the medical marijuana card, but the third phase would include subsidies to help them pay for the cost of buying marijuana in the dispensaries.

Blank said DOH has had discussions with dispensaries about how the financial assistance program might work, and said more information about the rollout of phase three of the financial assistance program will likely be available at the advisory board's next meeting – scheduled for November.

### Pharmacist access in dispensaries

Dr. Daniel Kambric said that he's heard complaints from patients who've reported that when they visit dispensaries there isn't always a pharmacist available to answer questions.

Comments submitted to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission in response to DOH's final regulations for the medical marijuana program raise similar concerns.

The state requires that dispensaries have a pharmacist available whenever the location is open, but the state has been allowing dispensary operators with multiple locations to have a pharmacist cover more than one dispensary at a time, meaning that many patients are forced to get a virtual consultation.

Kambric said it seems the department has gotten "sloppy" about requiring that pharmacists are available to help patients. In practice, when physicians sign off on that a patient qualifies as having one of the serious medical conditions that entitle them to medical marijuana, the physician doesn't write a prescription or otherwise issue any direct order specifying what form or dose of marijuana is appropriate.

Those recommendations come from the consultations with the staff in the dispensaries and if the pharmacist isn't available, the patient may be talking to dispensary workers with little formal health care training.

Mentch said that when she was working as a pharmacist in dispensaries, she would respond promptly to questions from patients visiting other dispensary locations and said that even when the pharmacist takes a lunch break, there should be another pharmacist available to cover to answer patient questions.

DOH Acting Secretary of Health Denise Johnson said that if board members are aware of complaints, they should pass them along to DOH staff so they can address the concerns with the dispensaries where there are problems.

"I certainly don't solicit these points for the patients, they're volunteering this information," Kambric said.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Founded in 2009 in Boulder, Colo., Terrapin Care Station is a consumer-focused cultivator, processor and provider of high-quality medical and retail cannabis products, with some of the most competitive prices on the market. The company leads the industry in corporate responsibility, developing one of the most comprehensive cannabis training programs for its staff of nearly 250.

Operating out of Clinton County, Terrapin was one of the first 12 initial recipients of a Pennsylvania medical cannabis grower/processor license. The company is consistently held as an industry model for patient-focused cultivation and production of high-quality medical cannabis. Terrapin also has operations in Colorado, Michigan and Missouri. For more information, visit [Terrapin.co](http://Terrapin.co).

**Dispensary Call:**  
**First Tuesday of the Month**  
 Tuesday, October 4 @ 1pm via Zoom

**Grower/Processor Call:**  
**Second Tuesday of the Month**  
 Tuesday, October 11 @ 1pm via Zoom

**Legislative Input Call:**  
**Third Thursday of the Month**  
 Thursday, October 20 @ 1pm Via Zoom

**MMAB November Meeting**  
 Tuesday, November 22nd @ 10am Via Zoom

**PCC Fourth Quarter Membership Meeting**  
 Friday, December 2nd @ 12noon Via Zoom

*\*All times are EST*



[Click Here to Add PCC Events to Your Calendar!](#)





## Senator Camera Bartolotta, PA-46 (R)

Senator Camera Bartolotta brings an entrepreneurial spirit and a wealth of real-world experience to her job representing residents of Beaver, Greene and Washington counties. A longtime resident of Monongahela, she was elected to her first term representing the 46th Senatorial District in 2014 and was re-elected in 2018. She currently serves as part of the Senate Republican Leadership team as Majority Caucus Administrator.

During her time in the Senate, Camera has authored many new laws, including measures to help judges keep the most dangerous domestic violence offenders behind bars; relocate victims of domestic violence who live in public housing; improve the availability of job training programs throughout the state; ease strain on farmers and food supply; provide additional resources to support fire and EMS companies impacted by COVID-19; preserve access to ventilator and tracheostomy care by dedicating additional Medicaid funding; protect Pennsylvania's fresh water supplies by ensuring the safe use of treated mine water in oil and gas operations; authorize the operation of Transportation Network Companies like Uber and Lyft in all 67 counties; strengthen penalties for motorists who injure workers and emergency responders in construction zones; and strengthen and improve the state's School Bus Stop Arm Camera Law. She also introduced a proposed amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution to limit the future growth in state government spending and protect taxpayers.

Camera also led efforts in the Senate to help more Pennsylvanians benefit from the state's Clean Slate law and allow homeless individuals to receive free photo identification – breaking down major barriers to employment and financial independence.

In the Senate, Camera's committee assignments reflect the main concerns of the communities she represents, including the need for quality, family-sustaining jobs and smaller government. She currently serves as Chair of the Senate Labor and Industry Committee, which is responsible for considering a wide range of issues pertaining to both employers and employees, including Worker's Compensation, Unemployment Compensation, workplace safety, building codes and workforce development. In this capacity, she led the Senate's efforts to hold the Wolf Administration accountable for flaws in the state's Unemployment Compensation system that led to delayed payments to hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians during the COVID-19 pandemic.

She also serves as a member of the Senate Local Government Committee, Senate Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, Senate Transportation Committee, and Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

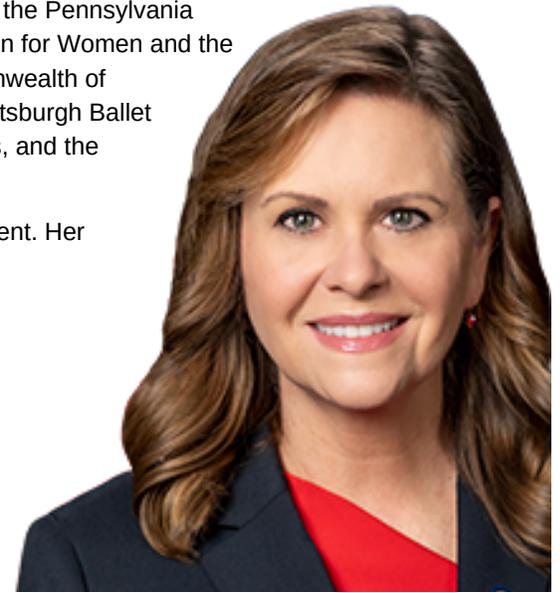
Camera also co-chairs the Senate Gas and Oil Caucus, a bipartisan legislative body that focuses on issues impacting the gas and oil industry with the goal of promoting policies resulting in a positive future for constituents, the business community and state economy. She also co-founded the bipartisan Criminal Justice Reform Caucus to focus on ways to help promote safer communities, reduce prison costs, reduce recidivism and ensure better outcomes for individuals who are part of the criminal justice system. In addition, utilizing her experience as an actor, director and producer, she founded the Film Industry Caucus, a bicameral group working to support research and analysis of the role that Pennsylvania's film industry plays in economic development, job creation and revenue enhancement.

Prior to being elected to the Senate, she opened the first quick-lube business in the Mon Valley, Duke of Oil, which provided quality, affordable service from 1988 to 2019. She produced "La Dolce Vita," a cooking and lifestyle show that aired on WPXI-TV and PCNC.

Camera is an active member of the community she has called home for more than three decades. She is a Rotarian, a member of her local Elks Club and several chambers of commerce. She was appointed to the the Pennsylvania Community Service Advisory Board by the Senate Majority Leader, PA Commission for Women and the Workforce Development board by Governor Wolf. She also serves on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Pittsburgh Film Office Board of Trustees, the Pittsburgh Ballet Board of Trustees, the University of Pittsburgh Institute of Politics Board of Fellows, and the Pennsylvania Prison Society Board.

Family is a great source of pride in Camera's life and motivates her civic engagement. Her daughter, Devin, is an award-winning news reporter and anchor in New Orleans. Her son, Dante, is a private pilot.

### **Currently Sponsored Cannabis Related Legislation:** **SB 167: Removal of DUI Penalties for Legal Medicinal Cannabis Use**



# PCC PAC

## BIG GOALS REQUIRE BIG BUDGETS

### Who can contribute?

- Individuals
- PACs
- Certain LLCs

### How much can you contribute?

- Any amount helps
- There is no limit
- Average 2021 contribution was \$1,000

## REASONS TO GIVE TO PCC PAC

- We need to stand up for those who stand up for us
- We must continue to build a coalition of legislative support
  - PAC Dollars grab legislators attention and allow our lobbying team and staff more facetime with more legislators
- Other PACS WILL spend against us
- There is legislation being considered NOW that affects MMOs

**Please consider contributing to PCC PAC  
by mailing personal or LLC check to :**

**PCC PAC  
P.O. Box 11501  
Harrisburg, PA 17108**

**[CLICK HERE TO CONTRIBUTE NOW](#)**

## PAC SPENDING BY ACTIVE ASSOCIATIONS

Organization	2021 Spend	2020 Spend
PA Realtors	\$ 1,158,281.00	\$ 873,216.00
PA State Education Association	\$ 622,836.00	\$ 2,069,327.00
Operators for Skill	\$ 313,618.00	\$ 365,420.00
PA Trial Lawyers	\$ 228,459.00	\$ 857,093.00
PA Chamber PAC	\$ 209,669.00	\$ 137,750.00
PA State Police (State Lodge)	\$ 116,685.00	\$ 54,925.00
Horseman	\$ 109,536.00	\$ 74,406.00
PA Health Care Association	\$ 102,415.00	\$ 32,158.00
P.C. PAC	\$ 14,207.00	\$ 4,865.00

# WANTED

## NEWSLETTER CONTENT

JUNE 2022

### PCC MONTH IN REVIEW



#### FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**PCC Members -**  
Well, we are still without a budget here in Pennsylvania. The parties have failed to reach an agreement on the amount of spending. The House was in session today and is expected to complete their calendar. Both the House and Senate will both be adjourned to a 24 hour call of the Chair and are expected back early next week. We will continue to monitor the budget process for items relevant to cannabis and report any pertinent developments including those related to the issuance of new permits through a code vehicle and movement on 280e.

As I am writing this update the House has just passed SAFE Banking Legislation via HB 331 which will go to the Governor's desk for signature. I am proud that PCC was able to work with many of the banking associations in Pennsylvania to get this across the finish line - now to get it done in Washington. Please consider reaching out to Senators DiSanto & Street to thank them for their work on this bill.

We have now had two monthly meetings with the Pennsylvania Department of Health. We are working hard to redefine the relationship between regulated and regulator as one focused on the mutual goal of improving the medical marijuana program in the best interest of patients. We were able to address several of our concerns related to the final regulations. DOH is not able to change the package as submitted but our meeting did provide an opportunity to address areas where further guidance is necessary if the regulations are approved by IRRC.

We are cancelling both the Dispensary & Grower/Processor calls for the month of July. - attendance has been waning during the summer months.

Additionally, we are considering holding our Third Quarter Meeting in person, in Harrisburg. Please keep an eye on your email for updates!

Happy 4th of July to you and yours!

Meredith Buettner, Executive Director

PENNSYLVANIA CANNABIS COALITION  
P.O. BOX 11501 | HARRISBURG, PA 17108  
717-220-3508 | WWW.PCANNA.ORG

PCC IS SEEKING ARTICLES, OP-EDS, WHITE PAPERS AND RESEARCH FOR INCLUSION IN THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.

SUBMIT YOUR CONTENT TO MEREDITH VIA EMAIL AT  
MEREDITH@PCANNA.ORG