



November 7, 2025

Dear Senator Meredith, Representative Moser, and Interim Joint Committee Health Services members,

I'm writing to urge your support for a critical adjustment in Kentucky's pain management laws. As someone in long-term recovery and deeply engaged in advocacy, I've witnessed how current regulations can unintentionally limit safe, non-opioid options for people who actively avoid addictive substances.

In 2021, I underwent elbow surgery. Despite my physician noting in my file that I did not want opioids, the surgical team still attempted to prescribe them. It took persistent advocacy on my part to ensure my recovery plan was respected. Earlier this year, my wife—also in long-term recovery—was in a serious car accident and transported to the ER. When she declined opioids, the only alternative offered was over-the-counter medication. She was in acute pain, and yet the system gave her no viable non-opioid options. She didn't have two weeks to wait for a specialist or navigate red tape—she needed compassionate, effective care in that moment.

These experiences are not isolated. They reflect a broader issue: our laws make it easier to prescribe addictive opioids than to access safer alternatives. We must empower physicians to offer a full spectrum of pain management options, especially for those in recovery. This is not just a matter of policy—it's a matter of dignity, safety, and public health.

I urge you to support legislation that expands access to non-opioid pain treatments and removes unnecessary barriers for providers and patients alike. Let's ensure Kentucky leads with compassion and evidence-based care.

Sincerely,

Billy O'Bryan

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