

Montana

Montana residents voted to expand the state's medical marijuana system with the passage of Initiative 182, which removes limits on the number of patients providers can serve. Proponents of the measure argued that the existing restrictions blocked patients from accessing care.

The passing of the initiative would reverse provisions of a bill passed by the Montana Legislature in 2011. Earlier this year, the Montana Supreme Court upheld parts of the bill that were challenged in a five-year legal battle.

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Most medical marijuana patients were left without a registered provider under the restrictions. Since they went into effect, patients have left the program. More than a third of patients registered in September left over the next month — 7,785 remained in October, according to the state health department.

I-182 adds post-traumatic stress disorder to the list of eligible conditions, allows for lab testing for marijuana and orders annual health department inspections of providers.

The opposition group to I-182, Safe Montana, was principally funded by Billings businessman Steve Zabawa.

Initiative 182 (I-182), the Medical Marijuana Initiative, would repeal the medical marijuana three-patient limit for providers. Montana voters overwhelmingly approved medical marijuana in 2004, but the state legislature repealed the law soon after and replaced it with a much more restrictive and unworkable law. I-182 will ensure safe and legal access for patients through greater accountability for providers and the removal of the three person patient limit.

Montana's cannabis program can be found at <https://dphhs.mt.gov/marijuana.aspx>