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The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Minister of National
Defence The Honourable Kent Hehr, Minister of Veterans
Affairs House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Ministers,

Veterans Affairs Canada has been providing coverage for medicinal marijuana since 2008. Since 2011, the number of Veterans in the program, as well as the substantial cost, have increased dramatically.

The Royal Canadian Legion is very concerned with the lack of medical research on medicinal marijuana that establishes an evidence base on the use of this substance for Veterans with mental health conditions. We have heard at various Stakeholder Summits from Veterans who are using marijuana of their success stories; but this is all anecdotal information with no known scientific research upon which to base substantive findings. Now is the time for the government to conduct and fund research into the use of cannabinoid-based therapy for Veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

We have been informed that the Royal Mental Health – Care & Research team have submitted a proposal to both departments to conduct research into the use of cannabinoid-based therapy. In addition to the need for research in this area they have approached The Legion to consider a philanthropic gift that would be directed to a program that will focus on developing a new line of optimized cannabis-based treatments for sleep disruptions associated with PTSD.

The Royal Canadian Legion is very supportive of ground-breaking work being carried out at The Royal in mental health research for our Veterans, as evidenced by our donation of \$1,000,000.00 dollars last year to assist in the purchase of a PET-MRI machine. Mental Health research is important to us and we support both of these research proposals. However, we firmly believe that the government should be sponsoring the research on the use of cannabinoid-based therapy and testing the efficacy and optimising cannabinoid-based therapy for arousal and sleep disturbances in Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Our sailors, soldiers and airmen and women deserve to know if the use of cannabinoid-based therapy is a safe method of treatment for mental health conditions and the potential side effects. There is no better way to demonstrate your commitment to support those who served their country than to conduct this research.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David P. Flannigan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'D' at the beginning.

David P. Flannigan
Dominion President