

Student Senator Tara Chatteraj proposed a resolution supporting medical marijuana. The solution would urge the University to revise both the Student Code and University Housing on regulations regarding the possession and usage of medical marijuana. Illinois' medical marijuana program allows individuals diagnosed with one or more conditions to apply for medical cannabis identification card. However, students will still have limited options. Because it is illegal on a federal level, universities are hesitant to allow medical marijuana on their campuses and how it will affect federal funding. Chatteraj said that this is a problem for these students.

"They don't have a lot of options, unfortunately. Mostly, they have to hide it and lie about it," said Chatteraj. Jake Block has a prescription, and lived on campus last semester. "I need it to function," Block said. "I wasn't about to let a rule prevent me from getting the medical care that I needed."

"With the right strain and dosage, cannabis has been shown to be very effective in treating serious conditions like seizures," said Ann Nelson, assistant manager of Phoenix Botanical. "I would find it difficult to believe the University wouldn't want a student to be able to take their medication."

Block said the policy also harms the perception of it. "(The prohibition) perpetuates the stigma of medical marijuana, that it's just a substitute for recreation marijuana. It delegitimizes the relief and benefits that medical marijuana can give."

Associate Chancellor of Public Affairs Robin Kaler doesn't see the policy changing anytime soon. "The University still has to follow federal laws. If we violate federal law, it puts our federal funding at risk."

Director of University Housing Alma Sealine agreed. "I don't think there's a quick resolution here, knowing that there are deferral guidelines that we would have to make sure we weren't hindering. I applaud (Chatteraj) for raising these questions, but I would say (a policy change) is not going to happen there and would need a significant investigation with a variety of offices on campus."

The resolution was referred to the committee, and waits for discussion.