

Democratic gubernatorial candidate says it's time to legalize cannabis for recreational and medicinal use, and grow Wisconsin's economy.

MADISON, WI - Democratic gubernatorial candidate Kelda Roys released a video Thursday highlighting the positive impacts that legalization of cannabis for medical and adult recreational use can have in Wisconsin.

Roys' video tells the story of a man, Heath Rush, who became addicted to opioids while experiencing back pain due to injury. Heath states that he feels he, "could have gotten through 90% of the back-pain without a single opiate if I just had medical-grade marijuana."

A transcript of the video has been provided at the end of this release.

Kelda Roys released the following statement:

"Adults should be free to use marijuana without fear of prosecution. We need to stop using our criminal justice resources to prosecute and incarcerate people for cannabis use. We can earn revenue, improve Wisconsin's agricultural economy, and help stop unequal enforcement that drives racial disparities in our criminal justice system. It's time to legalize cannabis for recreational and medicinal use, and grow Wisconsin's economy."

To read more on Kelda's plans to legalize cannabis, click here .

“It’s Time to Legalize Marijuana” Transcript:

Heath: I was an opera singer for several years… There was this one time where I had to jump off stage, and it made me blow a disc in my back. I did not have health insurance at the time - I couldn’t really go to the doctor and have a surgery at the time, so I had to medicate it.

The doctors put me on Vicodin. I begged them for an MRI. Finally, when they did it (the MRI) it turned out I did need surgery on my back. I got to where I could not get the opiate out of my system. I could not go more than two, three hours without popping a couple pills.

I didn’t even have the urge to take the opiate once I started smoking. I feel I could have gotten through 90% of the back-pain prior to surgery without a single opiate if I just had medical-grade marijuana.

Kelda Roys: I’m Kelda Roys and I’m running for governor of Wisconsin. It’s time for our state to legalize cannabis, both for medicinal purposes and for adult recreational uses. Thousands of Wisconsinites are suffering from chronic pain from muscle spasms. Cannabis can help alleviate those symptoms, relieve their suffering, and it’s often safer than alternatives like opioids.

Secondly, we’ve got a huge criminal justice problem in our state. We incarcerate too many people and we have some of the worst racial disparities in the nation. Now, legalizing cannabis isn’t going to solve our criminal justice problems, but it is certainly a step in the right direction.

Finally, legalizing cannabis can have a great impact on our economy. Think of all the family farmers in Wisconsin who are struggling to make ends meet. A cash crop like industrial hemp or cannabis can help them do that. Finally, the states that have legalized cannabis have seen an influx of hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenue. We can put that revenue to great use in Wisconsin on our schools, our roads, our healthcare system. I’m Kelda Roys, and it’s time to legalize cannabis in our state.

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Kelda Roys, 39, is a small business owner, attorney, former state representative, and past head of NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin, who has been standing up for women and families throughout her career. In the Assembly, she stood out as an influential and effective lawmaker, delivering results for working families and helping lead the opposition to Governor Scott Walker's divisive agenda. As the parent and stepparent of four girls, Roys will fight for paid family leave, affordable childcare, student debt relief, great schools, and healthcare for all. In a year in which Wisconsin voters are ready for change, Kelda Roys provides the clearest contrast to Scott Walker.