

# Hello,

My name is Garrett Coats and I've been breaking the law almost everyday for last 8-9 years, because I've consumed a plant. Cannabis, that is. In 2008, after graduating high school and doing a year of trades school, I received a diploma in carpentry. Well, that career path ended all too soon when I fell 20 feet from rafters, breaking both wrists, bruising my liver, a partial collapsed lung, and being knocked unconscious. I very quickly became addicted to opiates. Now, let's fast forward 4-5 years, I became a LPN. I'm still battling opioid addiction but it's okay because a doctor is prescribing the drugs. Fast forward again. Now, it's 2015, I'm tired of depending on pills to ease my pain and decide to start smoking cannabis. I fell in love immediately! I didn't need to take anymore pills! My job, however, decided otherwise when I got popped by a random urine analysis test at work. I lost my job. I did out-patient treatment for a little over a year, while going to NA and AA meetings, all while abusing Ambien, a sleep-aid, prescribed by my doctor. In 2016, I meet a beautiful girl that turned me back on to smoking cannabis again and have been free from all opiate and mind-altering medication for over 5 years now. This is a healing plant, that regardless of what your "beliefs" are, has been scientifically proven over and over again to help cure addiction. Keeping this plant illegal is depriving the people of a healing medicine. Prohibition is the problem and so are the lawmakers that refuse to adjust their skewed viewpoints on a plant that has been around for thousands of years. I lost a brother-in-law in 2020 due to alcoholism at the age of 31, I lost my mother to breast cancer at the age of 45 in 2011, and I lost my sister in 2018 to suicide. It's quite possible they'd all still be here if cannabis wasn't prohibited. The amount of tax revenue generated from legal cannabis is in the millions of dollars in other legalized states when it is taxed and regulated like cigarettes and alcohol. You're seeing a reduction in crime, a reduction in teen use, a reduction in overdose deaths from opiates and heroin, etc. the list goes on and on. I've taken time from day to write this to you, and I expect you to take the time and finally acknowledge the benefits of legalizing cannabis for adult use in the state of Minnesota. Thank you for your time and have a nice day.