

Conservative county OKs medical pot

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Conservative Orange County, Calif., will license the use of medical marijuana and issue ID cards to patients entitled to use it.

Tuesday's decision by the all-Republican county supervisors marked a reversal from three months ago when the plan seemed doomed, The Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday.

Advocates of medical marijuana intensely lobbied Orange County supervisors, telling them licensing and IDs would eliminate wasted court costs and prosecution time spent on medical marijuana possession cases.

Federal law continues to treat marijuana as an addictive substance with no medical value, while Californians in 1996 voted to let doctors recommend marijuana to their patients.

While 32 counties, including Los Angeles and Riverside, have similar plans, getting it approved in Orange County was considered a milestone.

"It sends a message to other counties," Aaron Smith, a medical marijuana advocate, told the Times. "If Orange County can do it, anybody can do it."

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