

# Michael J. Fox Foundation Policy SVP to Join Board of Directors of the Council for Federal Cannabis Regulation (CFCR)

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Today, the Council for Federal Cannabis Regulation (CFCR) announces Ted Thompson, JD, senior vice president for public policy at The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) will join CFCR leadership as a member of their Board of Directors.



Having learned about Ted's background, and now that we are getting to know him personally, we could not have asked for a better person to be a part of CFCR,"

*Sheri Orlowitz, CFCR Board  
Chair*

Thompson brings more than 25 years of experience in public policy, government relations and nonprofit management to CFCR's overall mission to create a regulatory framework around the use of cannabis and MJFF's goal of removing the barriers to research on cannabis as a possible therapeutic option.

Increasing Access to Cannabis for Parkinson's Research and Care Cannabis — including marijuana and CBD products — has shown early potential to help treat and manage Parkinson's disease (PD). But restrictions,

including marijuana's status as a Schedule I controlled substance, have blocked needed research that could advance it as a therapeutic approach to Parkinson's.

Today, an estimated 6 million people worldwide live with Parkinson's, a number that by some estimates could double by 2040. Funding and enabling rigorous research into every potentially promising therapy for Parkinson's is fundamental to The Michael J. Fox Foundation's mission to accelerate better treatments and a cure for the benefit of these millions of individuals.

"People and families living with Parkinson's disease have the right to demand public and private support for research into every potential treatment, including medical cannabis, that could safely and effectively help manage the disabling motor and non-motor symptoms of PD," Thompson said. "As a member of the CFCR Board I'll work to help create momentum on legislative and other regulatory fronts for improved access to cannabis in Parkinson's research and care."

Thompson served as president and CEO of the Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) from 2014 to 2016, at that time the unified voice of Parkinson's advocacy in Washington, D.C. In 2016 Thompson joined MJFF and led the absorption of PAN by the Foundation. Today, the Foundation is the nexus of Parkinson's advocacy on Capitol Hill and across the country, focused on securing increased investments in Parkinson's research, building resources for secure and effective data collection in scientific research, defending research freedom to explore all possible paths to new treatments, and ensuring that people with Parkinson's are able to access high quality, affordable care and services. Results of these efforts to date include the creation of a federal data collection effort and several state Parkinson's registries; increased resources at the National Institutes of Health focused on PD; and ongoing work to prioritize research into environmental triggers of PD. The Foundation also works to organize and support a nationwide community of Parkinson's patient advocates on the front lines of educating elected officials and policy makers about the needs of people and families living with Parkinson's.



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According to CFCR Executive Director Sarah A. Chase, Thompson's addition to the Board represents an important win for both organizations' missions.

"We look forward to working with Ted on strategies to encourage the federal government to pass legislation and implement regulations expanding the ability of independent entities to conduct meaningful, necessary research that will benefit people and families with Parkinson's," she said. "His background positions him well to help lay the groundwork for such activity."

Earlier in his career, Thompson was vice president of federal government relations at the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society. In this role he led significant research into cannabis and coordinated strategic lobbying efforts to eliminate its research barriers. Eight years later, several U.S. states have legalized cannabis, but the federal piece is still missing. Thompson has also independently consulted for several nonprofits, for-profit companies and political entities.

“Having learned about Ted’s background, and now that we are getting to know him personally, we could not have asked for a better person to be a part of CFCR,” said Board Chair Sheri Orlowitz. “Through The Michael J. Fox Foundation, Ted represents a strong, well-respected institution, whose vision and objectives are fully aligned with our own. The Board welcomes his guidance on our mission to create accessible and safe and therapeutic pathways for cannabis.”

#### ABOUT CFCR

The Council for Federal Cannabis Regulation (CFCR) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit based in Washington, DC. The mission of CFCR is to assist the government, and specifically federal regulatory agencies, to rethink, develop, and implement evidence-based cannabis regulations. Our overarching goal is the de-stigmatization, normalization, and legitimization of cannabis on behalf of consumers, the professions, organizations, and businesses who support and serve them. We do this by serving as a conduit for informed scientific research, inclusive education, and by mainstreaming the best practices that enable the industry to maximize its potential. For additional information please visit [www.uscfc.org](http://www.uscfc.org) and follow us on social media @USCFCR.

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