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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Green Clinics' Statement Regarding Closure of Business

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- On December 31, 2019, Emily Branch, founder of The Green Clinics, announced the closure of the company, effective immediately.

“Due to other providers failing to follow Article XIV and its associated rules, and the DHSS’s failure to enforce the law, The Green Clinics will close effective immediately.”

Kansas City based Green Clinics, which had locations across the state, was the first board-certified cannabis clinic to open in Missouri. At one time, it had locations in Kansas City, St. Louis, Butler, St. Joseph, Versailles, Poplar Bluff, Trenton and also provided telehealth visits.

Branch wants to reassure her clinics’ patients that all certifications issued by The Green Clinics are still valid. Additionally, all patients who have received their medical card approvals from the DHSS, the state’s regulatory agency, are still legal. However, patients will need to select a new physician when it comes time to renew their certification next year. Missouri law requires annual recertification and reapplication to the state to renew medical cards. Any Missouri state licensed physician in good standing can complete a certification for a patient.

Currently, Branch is focused on determining which physician or clinic to refer patients to. “Our first priority is to our patients,” said Branch. “It’s important they end up in good hands. And to us, being in good hands means being ethical, knowledgeable about the program, and willing to follow the law.”

Branch possesses evidence that physicians Dr. Zinia Thomas and Dr. Lisa Roark, among others, are not following the letter and spirit of Article XIV, also known as Amendment 2, and its subsequent regulations. She began receiving evidence last summer provided by a St. Louis physician competitor who shares her disdain for the lack of compliance and enforcement. Branch has provided this evidence to the DHSS.

As has been previously reported, Dr. Thomas is mass certifying people without reviewing medical records, diagnosing every patient with “Generalized Anxiety Disorder,” signing certifications without meeting with patients individually, and relaying inaccurate information about consumption, possession and cultivation of medical marijuana. “You are now temporarily able to legally consume, possess, and cultivate medical marijuana for your personal medical

use,” reads a handout distributed at Dr. Thomas’ traveling events. Branch was provided this document by one of Dr. Thomas’ angry patients who was not educated by Dr. Thomas on the application process and did not realize she also had to apply to the state for a medical card.

However, Branch states, “This is simply inaccurate information and puts Dr. Thomas’ patients at risk. Certified patients are not yet allowed to legally possess marijuana unless and until they have submitted their application to DHSS. Additionally, they must have in their possession **both** their physician certification and the email received back from DHSS showing they applied for their medical card to be legal.” (*See Amendment 2, [Section 5 entitled “Additional Patient, Physician, Caregiver and Provider Provisions \(1\)”](#) “...must produce a certification and digital confirmation of your submitted application.”*)

Similarly, Dr. Roark seems to be skirting the rules as well. She employs Dr. Paul Hannam, an Assistant Physician (also known as an “extender”), who has been conducting patient evaluations in place of Dr. Roark on at least some occasions. In this instance, Dr. Hannam does not fit the definition of a “physician” capable of certifying patients (*See [Amendment 2, Section 1.1 entitled “Purposes” and Section 1.2, \(12\) entitled “Definitions”](#) and the Emergency Rules promulgated by DHSS, [See page 4 of the Rules, 19 CSR 30-95.010, Section 29 and 29\(A\)](#)*). Yet, he does not sign the certifications; Dr. Roark does -- without ever “meeting” with those patients as required by the DHSS’s rules (*See [page 31 of the Rules, 19 CSR 30-95.110, Section \(1\), \(B\), 8, B.](#)*).

“It is our belief that the voters of Missouri wanted a legitimate medical program,” says Branch. “But is that possible in an environment where providers are allowed to operate while blatantly violating Amendment 2 and the associated rules? And why does DHSS refuse to enforce their own rules? It is absolutely within the DHSS’ purview to enforce the Missouri Constitution and the rules of the program it created and yet, despite multiple notifications by various sources, the DHSS fails to act on their regulatory enforcement obligations. They have simply punted my concerns to the Board of Healing Arts, which has no authority to enforce the rules of the medical marijuana program. The Board of Healing Arts has authority over physician licensing only. We are not disputing Dr. Roark and Dr. Thomas currently have active licenses.”

Branch continues, “If I had used mid-levels instead of fully licensed and board-certified physicians, we would still be in business because my labor rate for a mid-level is half of what we had to pay for physicians. “We chose to follow the law; and because of that, we are out of business.”

Green Clinics patients who have questions or concerns can contact Emily@LSSKC.com for more information.