

**“All I want is to live a better life.”**

**Name: Julie Falco**

**Age: 42**

**Home: Chicago**

**Profession: Activist**

**Disease: Multiple sclerosis**



Photo by Paul Merideth

Dear legislators:

For over 20 years, I have been researching, studying, and managing the symptoms of multiple sclerosis. I have been prescribed every pharmaceutical reputed to be helpful for MS, only to experience debilitating side effects that made it difficult to continue treatment. In 2004, I began eating cannabis brownies and found it more beneficial than any other medication I had previously taken. As of today, I am off of all pharmaceutical medications and living a relatively active life. Now I only use cannabis to treat my symptoms, and every once in a while take Tylenol with codeine as a backup.

I have been at the forefront of the medical cannabis movement in Illinois for the last five years and have testified before Senate and House committees in support of medical marijuana legislation. I have visited with legislators and been interviewed by media outlets locally and nationwide. I know for a fact that my story and the connections I have made with other patients have given hope to many. Even though medical cannabis is currently illegal in Illinois, I believe that physicians, healthcare professionals, legislators, and the public can come together on this issue – it is time to change our laws.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Falco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.