

F R E E

Michael Pelletier

INCARCERATED SINCE 2004

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**End LIFE SENTENCES
for Marijuana**

Michael Pelletier, a wheelchair bound paraplegic since the age of 11, sits in federal prison serving a sentence of life without parole for a nonviolent, victimless marijuana conspiracy offense. To listen to prosecutors and press reports at the time of trial, Pelletier was a calculating kingpin behind a multi-million dollar drug ring, living a lavish, opulent lifestyle off his ill-gotten gains. That narrative is vastly different from the reality.

Pelletier says the reality is he was more of a facilitator than a distributor. He lost the use of his legs when he was run over by a tractor at age 11, and first discovered the therapeutic benefits of cannabis at age 14 for both the physical and psychological symptoms that remained long after that terrible accident. While he has no idea how much witness Adam Halford, who admitted to lying to the grand jury and exaggerating the scale of Pelletier's alleged operation, might have transported for others, he was a single customer who purchased enough to treat his own medical conditions of pain, spasticity, and bladder ailments. Pelletier admits bought in larger quantities because it was a more affordable way to get the medicine he needed and gave him a little extra to sell so he could afford it, but nowhere near the quantities he was accused of.

Despite lying under oath and admitting to transporting drugs, Adam Halford got a slap on the wrist while Michael Pelletier received a life without parole sentence. The judge who sentenced Pelletier said, "It is striking you ran a sophisticated drug operation from your wheelchair. That makes the court wonder what you could have done if you turned to legitimate endeavors."

Had Judge Woodcock bothered to consider Michael Pelletier's background, instead of relying on the words of liars, felons, and snitches, he would have discovered many "legitimate" accomplishments, despite the man's severe handicap. Michael studied at the Bulova School of Watchmaking and became a certified watchmaker and jeweler. He increased the value of money and assets shared with him by his parents with careful investment and savings. He bought and repaired cars that he sold at a profit. He and his then girlfriend invested in a beauty salon that she still runs to this day. He did not get rich but he survived. Never did he think his meager earnings would be used against him as being part of "criminal proceedings."

Even in prison Michael Pelletier has never stopped achieving and growing. He is learning how to play the guitar and has taken up oil painting and by all account he is quite good.

Pelletier says he does not seek sympathy or special treatment, but also does not feel the punishment fits his crime. He says, "Having a life sentence is a feeling of dying every day. It's worse than death that happens one time. It's a living death."