



June 21st, 2021

Re: BOS 6-22-2021 Agenda Item 4ax & 5g, 5h

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

The Covelo Cannabis Advocacy Group (CCAG) has offered previous recommendations for cultivation expansion in Mendocino County. We have felt unheard time and time again, despite our efforts to provide recommendations for equitable expansion opportunities for cultivators both legacy and new. To our dismay the Board has disregarded our recommendations. As the Board considers adopting the CCAO ordinance and instituting a 1- acre or 2-acre cap with “phased in expansion” over time, we implore you to cap cultivation to 1-acre MAXIMUM.

Mendocino County should take a proactive step towards the environment and conduct a proper EIR to assess the cumulative impacts of expanded cultivation sites in our County. Just because the State is offering an EIR exemption until July, does not mean we shouldn’t conduct the research for the type of cannabis ordinance that is being developed. In fact, if the County feels confident that expanded sites, even if phased over time will be positive to our communities, the watershed and the rest of the ecosystem then why is there an aversion to conducting one? Money and time should not be a reason to not conduct this important EIR research. There is funding coming in from the State that could help offset the costs and alleviate the financial burden on the County. If the Board initiated the process to begin now, the findings would match up well with the Type 5 State License which will not be made available until 2023. There is time to conduct this research and it would serve Mendocino County in the most beneficial way to do a proper EIR and gain trust and respect from those that, to this date, are in strong opposition to the CCAO ordinance as currently written.

Please remove 10% expansion from the zoning table, and only allow 1-acre sites in AG land zoning with a 20-acre minimum parcel size. We continue to advocate for small legacy cottage farmers who would like to be permitted to cultivate at 2500 sq ft and wish to see opportunities for them to be able to get a County permit on parcels that are 1-acre in size or larger. We continue to stand behind our outdoor expansion recommendation of up to 22,000 sq ft for both Phase 1 & 3 operators (with the exception of RR5 zoning in Phase 1) wishing to expand.

It's imperative that the County not rush through to adoption of an ordinance without making these important amendments. Otherwise a referendum to challenge what is currently being proposed will be initiated. Losing public trust is a very serious consideration and CCAG invites every Supervisor to carefully consider what has been voiced by the constituency of Mendocino County. Do not adopt a phased in approach without conducting a proper EIR for any expansion above 1 acre.

Thank you for the consideration of our recommendations.

Respectfully,



Monique Ramirez

For the Covelo Cannabis Advocacy Group