

County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

April 18, 2021

RE: Public comment on Cannabis Facilities/Case# OA_2021-0001

To Whom it may Concern:

I have worked collectively with our Hopland Community for years and we have met with the Building and Planning Department to ensure that a retail facility for cannabis would not be able to be located within 600' of a church located in the center of our community. But today's hearing requires your approval to remove the setback from only "church" facilities. This is curious, because the only church facility in Mendocino County that is being threatened with a cannabis retail facility is our Hopland church.

The Catholic Church in Hopland is located at the west end of Center Street and less than 600' away is US Highway 101. At which point there is a building that formerly housed the Hopland Superette, the community grocery store. It still currently houses the U.S. Post Office for our community of 6000+ and the empty property is described by many as the former hub of our community. A few years back it was in escrow to be sold and converted into a retail cannabis business and at the time the County had a process which has now been eliminated that allowed 1 person to fill out a survey and if the survey which was patently vague was not definitively against the permit for a retail cannabis business, the permit was issued. The County is supposed to serve all of its constituents, not just the ones who lobby and present a revenue windfall as cannabis claims to present. The community has supported two cannabis retail facilities for years in our tiny stretch of a town, we've worked well together and appreciate their contribution to our community.

I formed the Hopland Municipal Advisory Committee 6+ years ago upon the recommendation of Dan Hamburg, then our 5th District Supervisor. He encouraged me to create a vehicle where the community's voice could be heard. We've done that and have been successful and are starting to improve and rebuild our community. We've worked diligently with MCOG since 2016 and were able to work with Caltrans and they are now executing a 101 downtown regrade and improvement of our traffic and pedestrian corridor. That project is slated to cost almost \$20million and will be completed by the summer of 2024. The second very important project our community supported was reopening the Hopland School. We had to overcome tremendous efforts by the Ukiah Unified School District and a low-income housing developer to gain approval from the School Board to open a charter school. I'm pleased to share that our community will open the doors on September 7, 2021 and in the process will be restoring education to the Hopland community to ensure a thriving future. The school will be culturally responsive where all students are valued and supported and we're proud to share that we will now be able to provide access to outdoor education, blended-learning, native and community

school gardens, and emphasis on agriculture and strong support for cultural studies and multilingual learners.

As I said before, I've met with Mr. Vandewater, Director Schulz, Supervisor Williams and additional staff members to state that the Hopland community will fight all efforts to approve a cannabis dispensary within 600' of the Catholic Church.

On the first page of the Ordinance Amending Chapter 6.36 – Cannabis Facilities Businesses and Chapter 20.243 – Cannabis Facilities Section 1: 6.36.020 (C) (1) the first sentence strikes “or any church” .

Please remove the strike out and allow “or any church” to remain in that 600' setback requirement.

If the Board of Supervisors approves the “striking out” of the church facility, I will file a lawsuit against the County. The action to remove “church” from this ordinance will be catering to a special interest which we all know is egregious and will be overturned.

Julie Golden