

MENDOCINO COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION

President: Carl Magann; Vice President: Greg Warner; Secretary/Treasurer: Tod Patten
74 East Commercial Street, Willits CA 95490

Chairman Dan Gjerde
Board of Supervisors
County of Mendocino
501 Low Gap Road, Room 107
Ukiah, CA 95482

July 20, 2016

Dear Chairman Gjerde,

The Mendocino County Fire Chief Association strongly encourages the Board of Supervisors to call for an election, and present to the voters of the County, a proposed ordinance establishing a tax on cannabis. As the board knows, the Fire Chiefs and the County have been jointly struggling to find an appropriate funding source for the county's fire agencies. There is now before us opportunities to generate needed revenue that can help fill the funding shortfall facing the County's fire agencies.

It is no secret that there has been a very significant underground economy within the county that has not provided a proportionate share of revenue for the operation of vital public services. It is our contention that the greatest uncompensated impact from the marijuana trade has been on the local fire agencies and emergency medical services. A significant number of incidents responded to by local fire departments have been directly related to marijuana operations and associated drug labs. Our fire departments have reported up to 90% of their fire calls are related to these operations. Not only do these incidents pose the normal risks associated with fires, but they also have the added risks associated with unregulated construction, chemical use, and other inherent hazards of illegal and unregulated operations.

In addition to the fire-associated incidents, a significant number of medical aids, rescues and other public assistance incidents are directly associated with the marijuana industry. Medical emergencies, traffic collisions, and other emergency calls often require travel to very remote areas, which draw resources away from our communities for extended periods of time. Many of these incidents are outside the districts' boundaries.

The county's reliance on legacy industries such as logging and fishing to fund these vital services no longer provides adequate revenue. As we move to a new economy, the funding of public services will need an equitable system of taxation. We believe that a significant source of revenue can be generated through a cannabis tax that does not place an undue burden on the industry.

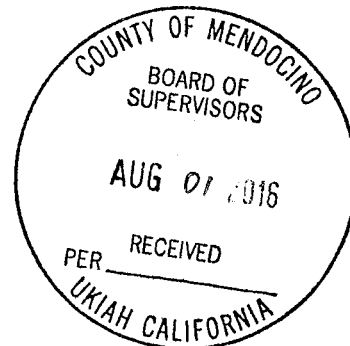
The Fire Chiefs recognize the advantage of a general tax as opposed to a special tax. However, we are asking that the Board recognize the significant impact that the marijuana industry has on our agencies and commits to appropriating an appropriate portion of the tax to the county's fire agencies.

Recognizing the mutual benefit which the county and the fire agencies will receive from a fair and equitable distribution of the tax, we are committed to providing whatever possible assistance we can give to see a favorable vote by the citizens of Mendocino County.

Sincerely,



Carl Magann
President Mendocino County Fire Chief's Association



Mendocino County Association of Fire Districts

July 30, 2016

Dan Gjerde, Chair
Board of Supervisors
Mendocino County
501 Low Gap Road, Rm 1070
Ukiah, CA 95482

Re: Fire-EMS and Cannabis Tax Revenues

Dear Supervisor Gjerde,


Local Fire Districts have a long indirect association with the marijuana industry. As first responders, along with law enforcement agencies, Fire-EMS is on scene at most marijuana production incidents in the County providing critical public safety services. Unlike law enforcement, Fire-EMS has not benefited from any funding augmentation programs. All response, equipment, and operational costs have been borne by local District tax payers and volunteer firefighters.

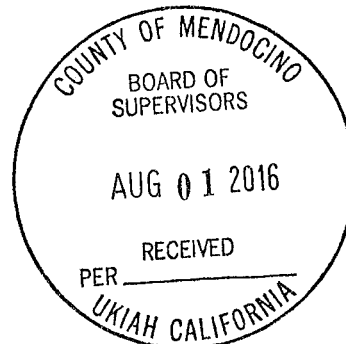
There is now an opportunity to correct this ongoing oversight. The Mendocino County Association of Fire Districts asks that Fire-EMS be included as a beneficiary to an equitable share of the currently proposed cannabis tax proceeds.

Current revenue streams are failing to keep pace with staffing and operational needs. Local Fire Agencies are in serious trouble. The proposed marijuana tax is a new general revenue source that presents the opportunity to properly include Fire's functional role and to provide funding assistance for these essential public safety services.

The Districts' Association formally requests that the Board of Supervisors allocate a fair and equitable share of these new cannabis tax revenues to support essential local Fire Agencies and their EMS services within the County. Including Fire-EMS as an identified top priority recipient of these general tax funds in the tax advisory ballot measure will be an important acknowledgment of this request.

Thank you for your consideration.


Ben MacMillan
Steering Committee
MCAFD
c/o PO Box 1
Elk, CA 95432



- Regarding Chiefs association MJ tax letter

From: Ted Williams <ted@ted.net>
To: <bos@co.mendocino.ca.us>
Date: 8/1/2016 2:01 PM
Subject: Regarding Chiefs association MJ tax letter

Albion Little River Fire does not see 90% of incidents being the result of marijuana related activity. We see few to none. Funding emergency services with this tax might be a good idea, but I believe we would gain greater public support with a more collaborative tone.

Ted Williams

