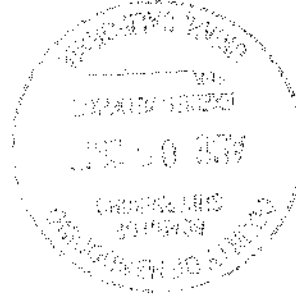


1661 Daphne Dr.
Willits, CA 95490

August 8, 2017

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



RE: Accommodating those growers to the greatest extent possible who wish to become compliant

Dear Members of the Board:

I am a small cannabis farmer from Covelo. After the 9.31 program last year I think many of us were lulled into a false sense of security. Although there were some problems with the program, overall it seemed fair and equitable, and so most of us assumed the new ordinance was just a matter of tweaking some things. It's now become apparent that there are numerous daunting issues with this new ordinance that didn't exist in the emergency ordinance. For this reason some of us are a little late to the party, but honestly this party really should just now be getting seriously underway. There are so many issues of such great import and complexity that it's going to take more time, energy, and involvement by all stakeholders to do it right than anyone might have imagined a year ago.

At the Board meeting last July 18, Supervisor Croskey indicated that she was in favor of bringing in as many of the county farmers who wanted to be compliant as possible (this was in the context of a discussion about allowing more time for commercial building and ADA compliance). At that moment she was voicing an idea that presumably is in the back of everyone's head - the more growers in the program the better. I think we're all aware of the benefits - better use of law enforcement resources, increased revenue to the county, restoration and protection of the environment, jobs and other economic benefits to the community, etc. However this idea, that the more growers in the program the better, has not, to my knowledge, been explicitly articulated as an operative "guiding principle" for the rule making that's going on with this ordinance and amendments thereto. I think it should be. I think it should be used as a sort of litmus test every time an issue comes up. I think the question should be asked "Is this proposed rule going to help or hinder the goal of getting more growers into compliance?" If it's going to hinder, then the next question should be "what can we do to mitigate that?"

Without going into details, I will say that implementation of this principle needs to be built into the system. One way to do this is through an advisory committee comprised of representatives of all stakeholders reporting directly to the Board.

So to recap, I'm suggesting the Board explicitly adopt as a guiding principle the idea that the more farmers that are brought into compliance the better and implement this principle by asking "is this rule going to help or hinder that goal?" And if it's going to hinder, what can we do about it?

It appears that fewer than 10% of the cannabis growers in this county are prepared to come out of the shadows and become compliant businesses. In my view this is a dismal statistic that the county should not accept as preordained. Can we not make this process a bit more user friendly? There's a lot at stake.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Yours sincerely,

Charles Sargenti

Farm location:

28455 Eel River Ranch Rd.
Covelo, CA 95428