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Subject: Cannabis compliance

Honorable Board Members

Recently it was brought to my attention that because I am in the cannabis compliance program, I may be asked to sign a Compliance Plan Statement. By signing this statement I would be acknowledging that state law prevents the use of a building until it is signed off by the building department. and, by signing this statement I would be agreeing not to use any building until it was signed off.

Signing this statement would affect all the buildings on my property. Home, personal use storage sheds and any building that is used for cannabis. I am in the Class k program working toward compliance with the county.

Signing this statement puts us in a compromising position and at risk from authorities and neighbors. I do not feel this is the intent of our supervisors.

New neighbors that purchased in our area in 2016 and 2017 have realized they do not have the option to grow cannabis and land value has plummeted. They are angry. They blame the compliance program and the farmers supporting the program. Other neighbors, that in the past happily benefitted from the generosity of cannabis farmers for private road maintenance are now greedy and want more money, even though there will be no increase in road use. All this comes at a time when cannabis prices are down, the cannabis taxes and permits are high and compliance requirements are expensive.

Is it possible that a profitable opportunity for our county and its residents is turning into a money grab that has now extended into our isolated Rangeland neighborhoods? A phone call from a angry or greedy neighbor can put us out of business.

It seems the cannabis farmer is being left unprotected throughout the compliance process. Many problems have surfaced throughout this process. The sheriffs department solicited money for zip ties this year knowing they were of no value. We paid for a mixed light permit because we were told if we didn't we may not have the opportunity to in the future. We will need to put a solar system in by the end of the year even though we presently have no need for it. It appears we will be paying for two track and trace systems. One for the county and one for the state, or has that changed? Our 2016 permit expired before the due date and we were not refunded. These are only some of the many inconsistencies that seem to continue to occur. I try to remain optimistic, however biased comments made by county officials on and off record over the past two years continue to reverberate throughout the community.

There is a history of uncertainty and sometimes dissent between the county departments involved in the compliance process. It also appeared that the county, water boards and fish and game were not on the same page. The combined officials (Mendocino counties building, planning, environmental health and agricultural department and state and regional water board and fish and game etc.) at the meetings we went to led us to believe a well was the answer to commercial cannabis. We put the well in, and now the county wants us to apply to Fish and Game. Another regulation another permit. Why?

The well went in in late June. The plants went in Late June. The supervisors gave us a year to complete the process for our drying sheds. Other county departments dropped the ball. We hung our harvest outside for drying. These plants will probably not pass the microbial testing. I hope our supervisors will find a way to protect us, so that the next plants that we harvest can be hung in our drying shed, can test clean and be sold.

How much longer the cannabis farmers of Mendocino county will be able to continue on the road to compliance will be determined not only by the choices Mendocino county makes but how quickly these decisions are made.

I represent many in our community. We voted for the legalization of cannabis. We did not expect the transition to be without problems. We do expect decisions to be made to support our industry. We deserve and expect our officials to educate themselves about our industry and needs. We expect to be taxed fairly, and we expect our officials to make decisions without bias. We expect our officials to provide a safe transition to legalization within our county.

In opposition to the federal government our state supported the people's vote to legalize cannabis. At the very least our county should not make our path more difficult than the state requirements. In regards to our county and state laws, our county officials should put protections in place for our rural cannabis farmers in regards to laws that do not apply to the operation of our farms and buildings. When it is impossible for protections to be put in place, verbiage should be used cautiously with the intent of protecting the farmer. Our legal system allow for this.

Mendocino pioneer

Sent from my iPad