

Dear Honorable Supervisors, August 4, 2020

Re: Agenda Item 5b

We support the MCA, CCAG memos on this item & the recent Casey Oneill OpEd in The Mendocino Voice speaks exactly how we see the situation. As usual, we want to thank you for your time on these matters & your steadfast determination to make Mendocino County a safe welcoming community for everyone.

We write again today, as a permitted 10,000 sq ft. cannabis farm in the hills of Covelo. We have been in the Mendocino County Cannabis Program since its inception. Our farm was in the 9.31 program & has obtained County Permits 3 years in a row & our State issued Provisional License with zero deficiencies. The only thing we are awaiting is CEQA in order to be able to qualify for our Annual State license.

In fact, although it's been a known issue, the County has told us repeatedly to not worry about CEQA, that they had the environmental impact covered, until now. So, even though we have been following along, attending BOS meetings, participating in Adhoc Committee meetings, Town Hall meetings, Working Groups, etc. with Staff & Supervisors present, as well as industry association meetings, we are surprised, confused & honestly bewildered by the recent Staff memo & attached ideas that seem to be backtracking, possibly leaving many small farms behind by switching to a completely new process with no qualified guarantees at this point... There are 275 County issued permits in limbo due to the CEQA debacle. There are approximately another 1000 applications in the queue. All of the above a part of phase one & phase two. We have stated in previously letters to this Board that we agree there are many aspects of the current ordinance that need to change, however, the focus right now must be on creating streamlined pathways to get the County cannabis cultivation program aligned with the State in a way that creates a workable solution, for these legacy phase one businesses. The farms that have their permits already granted must be prioritized. Time is of the essence.

We pay our taxes, even though it is clear the structure of the current system is one where our cannabis businesses are being doubled taxed. It has been stated by Supervisor McCowen at a BOS meeting that even with the broken ordinance, the County has made a profit from the regulated cannabis industry. Our taxes are needed, especially in the unprecedented times of pandemic when cannabis is one of the largest income streams the county has. We have been on a long road together transitioning from illegal to essential, and as the global economy recovers from this uncertain time, cannabis will remain essential & only become more mainstream.

We & many other farms have done everything right, as the laws continue to shift, we shift with them. We ask you to form an Adhoc committee to address the myriad of issues. Supervisors that will be on the Board beyond 2020 must make up this new committee as there is much that will not be completely worked out by the end of the

year. In the meantime, we ask you to make your decisions today with the lives & livelihoods of the families already in the cannabis program in mind.

Once upon a time, Mendocino was the leader in the United States with regards to cannabis cultivation under the 9.31 program. Well ahead of the times, it was the only one. We were the 1st county in the USA to have any sort of cannabis cultivation program since 1937. As much as we are a valuable legacy in the county, we are legacy to the cannabis community in the entire country & the world, we deserve a chance.

To be continued, but please, CEQA CEQA, CEQA is the issue at hand, & given the lack of available information & great potential for unintended consequences listen to the public today & direct staff to do everything in their power, spend every available hour, on making things right for Mendocino licensees to be granted our Annual State License, we promise it will pay off for the future.

Thank you ! Laura & Marty Clein