

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am writing in support of the petitions for CASE Numbers: R_2019-0009 & R_2019-0011 & R_2019-0015. I have been very involved in much of the discussion around the development of the cannabis regulations in Mendocino County and have witnessed a continued resistance to cannabis that is rooted in a dissension that is based on the viewpoint that cannabis is still criminal and outright bad. It is this rigid and outdated viewpoint for a plant that is now completely legal that has continued influence prejudice in creating bridaled ordinances which are overly cumbersome and in turn keeps relatively small cultivators from entering the regulated market thus perpetuating a black market economy, the very thing that the these retractors are arguing against.

There are many small businesses in our community who will attest that approximately 70% of their revenue historically has come in the form of cash. It doesn't take a genius to deduce that cannabis is the engine for our local economy. As the Berkeley Cannabis Research Center's findings have revealed, people in marginalized communities such as Mendocino County often have multiple income strategies in order to make ends meet. They are not full time cultivators, processors, or distributors. Rather, they might have a full time job and on the side cultivate a few plants, run a small clone operation out of their garage, trim a few pounds for a friend, or transport some cannabis to a dispensary in order to earn a few extra dollars to buy their children school supplies, pay for music lessons, or help cover rent.

The Berkeley Cannabis Research Center's findings beg the question that possibly the bulk of Mendocino County's gross cannabis production is not produced by what we consider to be "commercial" farms of 2500-10,000 square feet, but rather a very large portion of our county's gross cannabis production is produced by the thousands of small backyard cultivators whose gardens range from 500-1500 square feet. Yet, these cultivators have been effectively zoned out of existence through parcel size minimums and a regulatory system that forces cannabis growers to become full time cannabis entrepreneurs, something that is impractical for operations of such a small size. These cultivators, possibly a majority of Mendocino County's overall production, are being forced to roll the dice and stay in the black market.

It is time that sensibility replaces paranoia and for our community as a whole to embrace that cannabis is a legal commodity that just about everyone in our county benefits from in one way or another. The sooner we embrace our neighbors growing a few plants, or running a small business out of their home, the sooner we can bring everyone under the umbrella of regulation and the safer we all will be.

Additionally, I have spent some time in discussion with proponents as well as opponents to these rezoning applications. Some of the opponents of these applications are actually cultivators themselves, but are against inviting regulation

into their neighborhoods because they have witnessed the struggles and uncertainty that result. They want nothing to do with the cumbersome requirements of regulation, thus they find it easier and more profitable to continue on the path of the traditional black market.

In order to completely eradicate the black market we must move past the antiquated, self actualizing mindset that cannabis is bad and illegal, and instead move to design an economic and regulatory system that invites ALL cannabis participants no matter how big or small to participate. We will be a better and healthier community for it.

I urge you to begin this process by granting these small rezoning request applications. Thank you for your earnest consideration.

Sincerely,

Jed Davis