

Hello Board of Supervisors,

Much appreciation and support for taking a slower and more thoughtful move into Phase 3 with this proposed moratorium.

The world of cannabis is changing. Mendocino may need to 'Go Large To Go Cheap' at some point, but the planning department and Mendocino population is not yet ready for large farms solely to create bargain basement discount product. Mendocino County is not a bargain basement county. Mendocino County is beautiful and fiercely independent! We need to defend both that beauty and fierce independent nature!

I urge the board to eschew the 10% concept. We've all heard from a majority of the population that the comfort level seems to be no more than 5% with a one acre cap across all zoning types, including Rangeland. Is it an emotional response rather than a technical or scientific reasoning? Perhaps. Perhaps not. What we do know is that stories are coming out about bad acting licensees. Until these bad actors are able to control their actions, or until the Planning Department is funded sufficiently to be able to follow up on such complaints, it would be a smart idea to slow the expansion until the public can be made aware that such behavior is being monitored.

Before even expanding to 5% with a one acre cap, it is incredibly important that the Board increase funding for Planners and Planning software to process, on-board and visit current farms to actually see what is going on and resolve any perception that there is 'bad-acting' going on. As a public service, this work needs funding beyond just permit fees. Consider using a portion of cannabis minimum tax fees to boost the planning departments abilities for the next couple of years. Allow the lower growth rate until the county and water experts can confirm the impact of that smaller cap on water supplies. At this point, the Board of Supervisors will have a basis from which to expand the cap. Expand with funding and knowledge, not just hopes.

As you make your considerations, consider that the main transportation avenues through Mendocino County, our highways, convey the beauty of Mendocino - as well as some of the destitution. Our wide open meadows speckled with cows and elk along those corridors 'wash away' the blight found on other parts of the corridors. I urge the Board to include in the ordinance protections for those wide open meadows such that plants might be visible, but not fields of plastic or hoops where the public might see them. Preserve that meadow \*feeling\* by requiring hoops be placed behind tree-cover or minimized with tan fencing around them such that the feeling of meadow is continued. Or, require open-plant farming, without hoops within eyesight on corridors frequently traveled by the public.

Lastly, small farms tucked into their traditional space in the hills and byways of Northern Mendocino are able to employ neighbors who otherwise would have to leave their homes and move to an already housing-tight city. Keep hill dwellers in the hills and gainfully employed by small, eco-conscious legal businesses. Pulling small business employment out of their traditional dispersed areas and into concentrated nodes creates more unemployment in the hills, an already challenged economic area and further stresses the housing around those nodes.

Applicants who are unable for whatever reason to surmount the Phase 1 licensing hurdles, need to be invited wholeheartedly and without exception to Phase 3 where AP's and UP's both major or minor will be able to mitigate whatever hurdle blocked their path. 'Without exception' is the important part. Let the AP/UP process mitigate, alter and otherwise handle whatever circumstances blocked those Phase 1 applicants, be it that they grew under trees and were unable to provide a suitable prior, or were taken advantage of by a land speculator subdividing their parcel after Jan 1, 2016, among other Phase 1 hurdles that should no longer matter.

Allow small farms to economically support Mendocino County by:

- avoiding the perception of bargain basement product with a one acre cap,
- making it possible for the Planning Department to effectively do their job with sufficient funding,
- keep meadows along major travel corridors naturally appealing,
- encourage local employment even in remote locations (not just towns), and
- enable small farmers who were blocked by no-longer-relevant Phase 1 regulations to apply to Phase 3 without exception.

Let's work together to help Mendocino County bloom,

Heidi Wordhouse  
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