

Dear Members, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Re: Possible Adoption of Proposed "Cannabis Land Use Ordinance"

I am writing to express my strong concerns with and opposition to adoption of the proposed Commercial Cannabis Activity Land Use Ordinance. Fortunately, you still have the opportunity to reject this foolish and short-sighted plan that sadly, does little to serve the broad interests of County residents.

I am a long-time County resident and a member of the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee (MCCAAC), created in 2019 to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (BoS) to implement a Mendocino County Sustainability and Climate Action Program. Earlier this year, the MCCAAC sent a letter to the BoS regarding our many concerns with the ordinance, particularly, the absence of sound land use development that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and promotes carbon sequestration. The MCCAAC also strongly urged the BoS not to open rangeland zones to new commercial development that would create further fire danger and vehicle travel on dangerous roads. Unfortunately, the majority of the BoS members did not take our concerns seriously.

While the County's current cannabis permitting process has proven to be onerous and in need of simplification, this proposed expansion is not the solution. The concomitant costs associated with this expansion seriously outweigh the benefits. The ordinance appears to be designed for the benefit of the profit margins of large scale growers who may or may not make significant contributions to the County's tax base.

It is crucial that the permitting process cannot be left to our short-staffed planning department that would not be required to do an environmental review prior to issuing permits. Under the proposed ordinance, these use permits would be good for 10 years, regardless of who the owner was at the time of issuance. Who will monitor any changes in activity? As we approach what looks to be yet another drought year, where will the water come from to support these anticipated massive grows? The rule that would allow grows on up to 10% of a parcel of 10 acres or more is ludicrous; it invites large scale, well-endowed growers to control the market at the expense of locally-owned, small scale grows who let's face it, have under very stressful circumstances, been a back bone of our struggling economy for decades.

I live within the City of Ukiah limits but am aware as I am sure you are, of the extent of the environmental degradation resulting from large scale grows affecting our rural neighbors. While not all growers show such little regard for environmental protection of our beloved County, I fear that the barely regulated enticement offered by the proposed ordinance will appeal to the worst instincts of those looking to make a quick buck at the great expense of the rest of us.

In weighing your decision regarding this proposed ordinance, please consider the substantial opposition expressed by an impressive cross-section of political, economic and environmental interests. Many County residents are very upset at what appears to be the failure of 4/5 of this Board to heed the pleas of your constituents. As elected representatives, please listen carefully to these very legitimate concerns.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Most sincerely,

Susan Sher  
Ukiah, CA