



Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

April 11, 2021

Re: Item 5g on 4/12/2021: Discussion and Possible Action Including Direction to Staff Regarding Funded and Vacant Positions at the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office; and Sheriff Presentation on Specific Cannabis Enforcement Outcomes Board of Supervisors Can Expect with Positions Filled (Sponsors: Supervisor Mulheren, Supervisor Williams, and Sheriff-Coroner)

Honorable Supervisors,

MCA supports Sheriff Kendal in his efforts to protect public safety and resources in our communities. We share the community's concerns about any activity that constitute egregious environmental violations or public safety hazards, including those involving water resources. The Sheriff has rightfully focused on these issues and MCA applauds these efforts and supports them.

MCA believes that it is foundational in local regulation of the new cannabis industry in a post-Prohibition era, to draw a firm distinction between criminal activity and the civil administration of code enforcement. The sheriff has repeatedly made clear that those who are currently Program Participants, and those who would like to enter the program, are not the ones engaging in the egregious criminal activities that concern him. He has also stated that those who have been unable to enter the system must have a reasonable pathway to come into regulation, and that his job is made more difficult by not having clear reasonable permitting for those that want it.

To this point, many small cultivators have been locked out of the permit process through no fault of their own, and largely due to limited county staffing and a lack of viable pathways. This system failure has forced many into the illicit marketplace while they try to survive and find a way into legal compliance. Any increased resources for the Sheriff's Office must be accompanied by increased resources to County staff. In this way, a sensible division of oversight of cannabis activities can be achieved.

The War on Drugs has always been a losing battle. We recognize that there are egregious bad actors but side by side to enforcement there needs to be a path forward for cultivators who have not been able to enter into the program, especially since our local Equity Program has not been in place until now. The entire community benefits when more cultivation comes into compliance.

MCA also fully supports the filling of the vacant position of a Resident Deputy in Covelo/Round Valley to address the proliferation of egregious environmental and violent crimes plaguing that area.

Respectfully,

Mendocino Cannabis Alliance