

Greetings to the BOS,

My name is Blair Phillips, I live in Willits and have been on board with all of the legal permit program since the beginning, after four years I still do not have a permit, I have resubmitted all my documents three times and have been asked to resubmit AGAIN. As a legacy farmer whom originally started out growing strictly for cancer patients on a non profit basis I have been barely treading water to keep up with the changes and 2020 did everything but entirely crush me.

I partook in this program because when I asked questions from the authorities I was told that because I had been “playing by the rules” that the county would prioritize and “work” with me to ensure that I would get a permit.

I did not move to Mendocino to grow cannabis, I moved here because of wanting to live a simple natural and quiet life in the hills. This program is not designed for people trying to just be people. Between permits, licensing and taxes the government received 45% of my income in 2019. Barely enough to survive. I am blessed that I have had a little help from people I looked out for in better times to help me work toward my property being in compliance. I have made many decisions poorly based out of fear that I would not be up to standards and have spent most of my “profit” on things like septic designs, culvert designs, and the like. Meanwhile what is truly important like fire prevention work, watershed regeneration and being available for family have taken a back burner so that I could just stay afloat.

Now what? Will I have done all in vain? Will I not be able to get a permit? Further I am in range land ag, which to my understanding means that if I do not grow continuously I lose my standing. It feels inhumane. How can my permitting and licensing not be able to have non op with both county and state as long as I need it, just like registration on a car.?. I need to take care of my parents.

The whole point of working with the county and state as one of the first through the door of extreme trust was to be able to not live in fear, ironically I feel more fear and stress than I ever did as a small medical grower to keep up with all that the county and state request of me through compliance and finances. So many sleepless nights worrying that I've jumped through all the hoops in the right time! Is this what you intended for people like me? A contributing member of the community and the ecosystem?

- As these new rules come into play and are being considered for adoption I urge you to look out for PHASE 1 folks who put their life on the line to help innovate the bringing of cannabis into the mainstream and into the funding stream for the county and state.
- Remember that not all growers are just in it for the money and that these rules make it about that, which has negative effect on the well being of the community. How can you take into account people whom are not trying to make cannabis the only priority in their lives?

- Please see to it that small farms (under 10,000 square feet) are given some leniency in the seemingly unending process of giving so much of our profit AND REALLY OUR LIFE to you the governing authorities.
 - For example: people whom have un permitted buildings and other in compliance's be able to make realistic stratagey /timeline F to work on these things EARLESSLY in relation to income after taxes, permits and licensing.
- Please consider reducing the taxes and permit fees on small (10,000 sf) phase 1 farms so that we can survive as the market crashes (predicted to happen this year)
 - for example: writing off improvements to stay/be in compliance from local taxes and permitting
- provide help with Ceqa, considering that we were told from the beginning of the program we were exempt under your authority.

In fin, I urge you to consider that many small legacy homestead style farmers are STRUGGLING to complete even with new 10,000 sf commercial growers who just pop up 2o hoop houses careless to the heart of the community, foot print or eyesore it causes in our beautiful environment . Their Flat heartless grows are who these rules are designed for leaving the legacy mountain homestead growers below the surface gasping for air. MAKE A WAY FOR US TO THRIVE AND THE WHOLE COUNTY WILL BENAFIT.

Thank you for your consideration,
Blair Phillips