



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

August 2, 2021

Re: The Path Forward for Cannabis Permitting in Mendocino County

Honorable Supervisors,

Mendocino County now faces a crisis in securing the future of its traditional, hallmark cannabis industry and community. This Board, and all parties involved in recent attempts to revise or eliminate Chapter 22.18 proclaim a desire to protect existing operators struggling to become legal. But both as a result of the County's past decisions regarding cannabis, and current community responses to those decisions, we face nothing less than the possible extinction of our small cannabis farmers and their unique contribution to what could be Mendocino's rightful and distinctive place in the still developing cannabis marketplace. Simply put, hundreds of our existing operators face losing all licensure through no fault of their own.

Due to the likelihood that the referendum will be successful, in the absence of an adopted Chapter 22.18, we as a community must take immediate action to ensure that existing operators can move forward in obtaining a County Annual permit and State Annual license, while continuing to explore and open pathways that will maximize environmental and neighborhood protections for those not currently in the system wishing to participate in the regulated market.

To this end, MCA recommends that the Board consider the following simultaneous actions for addressing this crisis. These items would be the most pressing work for a new Cannabis Standing Committee, for which we have advocated in our memo submitted for Agenda Item 4f.

- Pass an Urgency Ordinance halting the implementation of Phase 3 under Chapter 10A.17 due to the drought emergency.
- Prepare an Urgency Ordinance to pass after the Portal closes, amending Chapter 10A.17 to allow a land-use discretionary component for existing operators who are unable to receive their County Annual Cultivation permit through the ministerial process of the ordinance.
- Develop a new discretionary land-use ordinance with full environmental review to determine appropriate conditions for canopy and zoning expansions.

We encourage the Board and County Counsel to implement these actions as soon as possible to avoid irreparable damage to our local licensed cannabis operators and community at large.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mendocino Cannabis Alliance
e: info@mendocannabis.com