

I am writing regarding the Mendocino Cannabis Program's portal and support extending the October 31st deadline for applicants that have submitted through the portal and are still in the review process. I am an applicant that has been in the process of securing a county permit for a small family cultivation site located in Anderson Valley. I applied back in 2017 and my file has sat in the program unreviewed and not assigned to a planner since that time. I have so much documentation to support what I have been through in trying to work through this process with the county. I currently have a provisional state license to cultivate and was forced to reapply through the portal regardless of the documentation I have sent to the department numerous times over the years. I was the first applicant to reapply to the portal when it opened in August and thankfully I was able to navigate the portal and have my application accepted. I know of so many other applicants that are currently still working through the portal review process and need to have this arbitrary deadline lifted so they can continue the review process with staff. I understand the challenges of MCP staff in reviewing all the applications that have been submitted through the portal, but staff issues and workloads should not result in applications being denied because they haven't been fully reviewed. Especially ones that have sat in the department for four years.

The county needs to lift barriers and find pathways/ solutions that will support legacy farmers that are state licensed and wish to continue to cultivate cannabis on their family farms. This is part of our regional heritage and these folks need a seat at the table in the legal marketplace. We are one of those small family farms. Outside of our cultivation we also have a micro-business license with a retail location at The Madrones in Philo. We showcase our farm flower as well as other Anderson Valley farms. Keep in mind that only 300 micro-business licenses have been issued in the state of California. We were overjoyed to hear last week that we were granted an annual (permanent) license for our business. We are one of 12 in the state that have an annual micro-business license. With several licenses I think I can speak from a place of experience on the difficulty of going through this process on a state and local level. By far the county permit process has been the most challenging. I am asking you to lift this hard deadline of October 31st for portal review and finish the process you promised these applicants years ago.

With Respect,

Jim Roberts