

October 18, 2021

Public expression on the cannabis portal

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Regarding the two most pressing issues with the Mendocino Cannabis program, to keep the portal open & to apply for the \$18MILLION grant funding, please note that they are both on very short timelines & actually go hand in hand.

The portal process is still filled with glitches. Embossed receipt holders going through the cannabis portal need more time for various reasons that are no fault of their own, which you have all been hearing about recently & will hear more about today. These applicants waited four years to have their fate arbitrarily decided by an artificial barrier of 90 days? And it's happening in the middle of the annual sun grown harvest? These are small family farms, often also generational homesteads. This transition is a DIY project for many legacy growers, from planting the seeds to filling out their paperwork. They don't have a legal department, compliance officer or a VP of Community Relations. Many of them don't even have the ADA facilities now needed to be able to employ the harvest help they once did. They certainly don't have a staff of Spanish speaking trimmers lined up to take up your time with hours of paid public comments about saving their business. The typical Mendocino cannabis farmer is the entire operation. They are out there cutting the flowers today to beat the rains tomorrow. Local associations like CCAG & MCA speak on their behalf. Because they are too busy to be here, they are literally trying to save the farm. It's cruel & makes no sense to have this hard deadline on the portal.

This Board created a situation where you are ultimately the boss, the MCP manager answers directly to you on the County organizational chart. We do not know if you need to extend the portal until the end of the year or indefinitely. But please give clear direction today to the staff & to the public. There should not be any automatic denials at the end of October for anyone who has submitted. In fact, once in process they may not even need to have an end date. And it's quite possible a letter or email still needs to be sent to those who have not even begun the portal process before they are denied. We understand you "legally" noticed it but many farmers live off-grid & not everybody reads the newspaper or is on social media.

It's interesting to note that earlier this year when the State asked Mendocino County Provisional License holders for an update on CEQA progress, they got approximately 700 responses. Why is there such a huge variance in the number of the submissions to the County portal by the exact same cohort of cultivators? Can the County cannabis program ask the State / DCC for the contact

information of the cultivators holding Provisional licenses in our county & use that database to communicate with cultivators, maybe even for another round of portal submissions?

AppendixG folks are also in flux, so many County permit holders still in the limbo of wait & see mode... barely any new State Annual Licenses have been obtained by cultivators in this County yet. But the good news is the Appendix G has been codified into State law as an accepted CEQA pathway, according to the MCP manager in the \$18MILLION jurisdictional grant public meeting. She said she no longer feels the need to rush around CEQA issues, that Provisional License holders have time, think she said until 2025, & also hopefully \$18MILLION to get through the CEQA process.

**BUT YOU CANNOT RECEIVE THAT \$18MILLION GRANT UNLESS YOU HAVE THE CULTIVATORS.**

It is earmarked to help transition Provision License holders to Annual Licenses & accessible funds will be based on the number of Provisionals presently active in the jurisdiction. That \$18MILLION grant submission is due approximately a week after the MCP is threatening to cut off the majority of the cannabis program's State Provisional Licenseholders who are in the portal.

Please listen to the applicants & their consultants.

Please listen to concerns CCAG & MCA outlined in their memos.

**PLEASE DIRECT STAFF**

**-TO EXTEND the PORTAL**

**-TO APPLY FOR THE FULL \$18MILLION GRANT**

**-TO ASSIST PROVISIONAL LICENSES TRANSITIONING TO ANNUALS**

**-TO SLOW DOWN & GET THIS RIGHT**

Thank you!

Laura & Marty Klein

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