

Dear Honorable Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of myself, my family, and constituents throughout the County, I highly encourage the Board to extend the deadline for submitting and or responding to the Portal for Phase I Mendocino County Cannabis Permits.

As you know, applicants have been working hard over the past several years to permit, license, and develop compliant businesses that support our local economy, communities, and sensitive habitats the right way. The entire process has been fraught with unforeseen obstacles and expenses. The County permit process has been difficult and faced numerous challenges since its inception including staffing, myriad program changes, and Covid impacts just to name a few.

Regardless of any biases, cannabis is legal in California along with some form of medical or recreation legalization in 36 other States plus the District of Columbia. Federal legalization is inevitable, and on the horizon. There is no turning back the clock on legalization. As our representatives, we have consistently asked that you support the efforts of the Phase I Program applicants through to issued permits for full annual State licenses. During policy development for the Phase 3 effort, considerable discussion addressed market forces and expansion for competitiveness in the Statewide industry. Industry in Mendocino County has never been directly comparable to the economic or social trends of the southland, the Central Valley, or our State's economic centers. Mendocino County is unique and beloved for it. Mendocino County cannabis cultivators produce craft cannabis, that has always been recognized as some of the finest in the world. Think of and equate craft cannabis with estate wines - small family operations that have their own unique niche in the market.

To be successful, contribute to our community, and compete in the statewide market and future national market, we don't need to grow exponentially today, what we need is to secure our full local permits and annual State licenses. The community, responsible agencies, State licensing authorities and your constituents are all seeking success for Phase I applicants. With Phase 3 rescinded there should be no rush to exclude Phase I applicants. The Portal and deadlines were developed to clear the way for Phase 3. With Phase 3 currently off the books, please take this opportunity to support your constituents and the sustainable community-based businesses they have been working so hard to develop over the last few years by extending the portal deadline to provide existing Phase I permit applicants and their businesses a fighting chance in these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Joshua S. Abrams

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