

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

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April 18, 2023

The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7240
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 820 (Alvarado-Gil): Cannabis Enforcement, Seizure of Property

Dear Senator Alvarado-Gil,

On behalf of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, we are pleased to offer our strong support of SB 820, which adapts the asset forfeiture provisions currently applicable to unlicensed manufacturing of alcoholic beverages (i.e., moonshining), to cover unlicensed commercial cannabis activities.

In 2018, El Dorado County voters approved Measures N, P, Q, R, and S to create regulations for a legal cannabis market. Since that time, applicants have struggled to meet the high standards of the voter-approved regulations and the illegal market still thrives. As discussed at the RCRC Ad Hoc Committee on Cannabis meetings, counties are looking to the State for a statewide enforcement mechanism to stop the current 'whack-a-mole' approach.

California law currently does not have penalties strong enough to deter the widespread illegal commercial cannabis activities present in many communities like ours. Unfortunately, many illicit cannabis operations quickly recover following enforcement actions due to complicit landlords, exploitation of workers, and remaining specialty equipment used for the cultivation and manufacturing of cannabis.

It is critical to ensure that the limited enforcement resources to target illicit cannabis operations be effective. SB 820 allows law enforcement to disrupt the financial resources of unlicensed conspirators that allow illegal cannabis operations to thrive.

This bill would assist with creating the legal cannabis market that El Dorado County voters approved in 2018.

For these reasons, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors supports SB 820 (Alvarado-Gil) and encourages your "aye" vote.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Thomas
Chair, Board of Supervisors