

Fax Cover Page

To: Clerk of the Board

From: Residents of El Dorado County

LATE DISTRIBUTION

Date: 11/14/2011

DATE 11-14-11

Re: Response to the proposed ordinance regarding the ban of medical cannabis.

Please distribute a copy of this letter to each board member to be read before a decision is made at tomorrow's meeting.

Thank you.

2011 NOV 14 PM 4:06
EL DORADO COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
EL DORADO COUNTY

Date: 11/14/2011

To: The El Dorado County Board of Supervisor

From: El Dorado County Residents

Re: Proposed Ordinance to Ban Medical Cannabis

URGENT...Please read this before making a decision in tomorrow's meeting.

If the proposed ordinance regarding the ban on outdoor medical cannabis gardens and collectives is passed as written, it will be a great disservice to the residents of El Dorado County. It is agreed that there needs to be zoning and regulations implemented for gardens and collectives, but banning them altogether is not the way to do it. This temporary ban could be legally extended for more than a year, which will put people who grow and provide their own medicine at risk of not being able to obtain it safely. There won't be any large outdoor gardens planted until late Spring, so completely banning the activity at this time is a moot point. We have plenty of time to come up with solutions before the next grow season.

The ordinance language, while containing some facts, also contains baseless opinion which tells me that it was written to satisfy the personal agendas of the authors, rather than truly protecting the health and safety of the local population. I don't think the authors of the proposed ordinance realize the amount of people this will effect. I manage a collective in Cameron Park. The doors have only been open for eight months. I have absolutely no advertising (only word of mouth) and I have over 1500 members. This collective signs up five to ten new members every day. Other clubs in the area have a membership count over 2500. There is an enormous growing need for the services of collectives who provide safe medicine in a safe location for patients; as more and more people are abandoning harmful addictive drugs to manage pain and other medical conditions.

I have called Supervisor Knight's office on several occasions over the past 8 months (always leaving a message with his secretary) for the purpose of forming an Ad Hoc Committee specifically to come up with regulations that will work for everyone. I received not one returned phone call from Mr. Knight. He is obviously not interested in listening to constituents who don't share his own opinions regarding the cultivation and distribution of medical cannabis to those who need it. As one of the authors of this ordinance, it is obviously something that he has been working on without the input of those

affected.

I propose that the Board of Supervisors postpones the adoption of a hasty ordinance and sees that an Ad Hoc Committee, consisting of representatives from legally running collectives, law enforcement and the general public, is formed to assist with the zoning and regulation of medical cannabis. This will ensure that all groups are heard and no one is left out of the decision making that affects everyone.

If a harsh stance is taken, it will drive the medical cannabis community back underground, giving power to gangs, organized crime, and the corner drug dealer who have no intentions on following the law. It will make it difficult for people who don't have the ability to produce their own, whether because of physical limitations or location limitations, to obtain their medicine safely. Regulation of activities rather than banning them can make it work for everyone. It will keep it in the light where it can be monitored, and the only enforcement needed will be towards those who are engaged in blatant illegal profiteering activity.

The ordinance written by Supervisors Knight and Briggs states that there will be no financial impact on tax payers. This is the first false statement. People who have discovered the benefits of cannabis over addictive opiates, and other socially acceptable pharmaceuticals which cause serious side effects, will not just stop providing for themselves because outdoor growing is banned. This will create enforcement and legal costs for our taxpayers. Indoor growing is much too expensive for the majority of patients who use free natural resources to produce their medicine.

They argue that outdoor gardens produce an offensive smell. We cannot give power to petty complaints. Whether or not the smell is offensive enough to implement a ban is undeterminable. Many enjoy the smell of the plant in bloom, just as one enjoys the smell of other herbs and odiferous plants. The odor is not causing harm to anyone. If we were to ban offensive smells, then perfume should be the first to go. There is nothing more offensive than shopping for groceries next to someone who has bathed in their cologne; or, not bathed at all. Part of cost of being a free American is tolerance for lifestyles that you don't necessarily agree with; not making criminals out of individuals who don't think like you do. Medical cannabis is not causing harm to anyone. It is only causing annoyance for people who

don't agree with the right to use it.

Another disturbing argument for the ban is the safety of our community. The Sheriff's Department has had no trouble from the collectives that have been trying to run legally in this county. Some have been running for years without the opposition knowing they were even there. South Lake Tahoe has several collectives that have been providing safe access for years and the West Slope (until recently) has had one store front and several delivery services. If you're going to use the argument that collectives attract crime then you must ban all banks (Umpqua was just robbed at gun point in Cameron Park last week), check cashing stores, liquor stores, wealthy homes with large amounts of marketable goods, etc.

Another argument for the ban states that people are concerned about growers being armed in their neighborhood. This basically says that it is acceptable for anyone to bear arms to protect their families except people who grow cannabis. It is fine for someone to keep a gun to protect their jewels or large screen television (which are attractive to criminals), but not your medicine. Also, the statistics regarding the theft of pharmaceuticals over the theft of cannabis is missing. There are more kids using, selling and dying from their parents pharmaceuticals than any other drugs; but, it is acceptable for a drug store to be on every corner.

The cannabis plant was put on the Federal Schedule I list in the early 1970s when Nixon declared his war on drugs and formed the DEA. Regardless of thousands of years of use with no reported fatalities, it was put there without scientific or medical research. Serious research didn't begin until the '80s with the discovery of cannabinoid receptors in the brain. Numerous medical research laboratories, both foreign and at home, have all agreed that it doesn't legally belong on the Schedule I list. The propaganda that began in the 1930s and continued until serious research began has been discredited. It has been found that it is not chemically addictive, it doesn't kill brain cells, and it has numerous positive medical effects. It is almost impossible to die from an overdose with a lethal dose rating of LD50. Both the Institute of Medicine and the American College of Physicians have petitioned to get cannabis removed from the Schedule I list. And, finally, the voters of California believe in the benefits of the herb.

One of the main active chemicals in cannabis, THC, has been prescribed by

physicians since the 80s in the pill form of Marinol. In 1999 THC in Marinol was allowed to be prescribed by physicians as a Schedule III drug. There has never been a fatality reported solely from the use of cannabis in its natural form. While testing Marinol, the synthetic pill form, the FDA reported 4 fatalities. This is one of the main reasons patients want to keep it simple and out of the hands of pharmaceutical profiteers. Patients should have the right to chose their treatment, especially if it is less harmful and non addictive than alternative (conservatively acceptable) treatments.

Let's punish illegal activity, not patients and collectives who are trying to abide by the law, provide safe medicine, and are paying their taxes. Many residents will be directly harmed if they aren't able to provide their own medicine. They will have to obtain it illegally or be forced to go back to addictive pharmaceuticals. All we ask is that you work with the residents of the county to come up with solutions that work for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration. We will be attending the meeting in the morning.