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Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors

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Dear Friends,

I'm writing to ask you to advocate for a letter to the state Department of Consumer Affairs – Bureau of Cannabis Control (“The Bureau”). In favor of the position that *the regulations should permit shared premises, including multiple businesses of same and different license types, as well as permit multilevel or vertical stacking of the designated premises*. The Bureau is developing regulations related to colocation of licensees on premises.

Many people who have grown cannabis in Santa Cruz will not be able to get their property qualified. Many won't be able to buy a property that will qualify. And some of these people will wind up continuing to grow illegally. That creates the attendant enforcement problems. *Adapting this proposal would be a win for the county (less black market grow); a win for the people who have been growing here since before January 1, 2013 who have been asking for regulation; and, a win for the greenhouse owners and land owners who can put their greenhouses or other lands or warehouses back into production.*

Here is my proposal:

- **INCREASES IN CANOPY SIZE** - Previous proposals set relatively small caps on the percentage of a parcel which could be used for cultivation, and the total allowed square footage of canopy, which varied based on zoning. *I recommend that the previously proposed allowable canopy be increased as follows (effectively doubling prior proposals for most zoning types):*
- **CA (Commercial Ag)** - *increased from 2% of the parcel, up to a maximum of 22,000 sq. ft. to 4% of the parcel, up to a maximum of 44,000 sq. ft.*
- **MULTIPLE LICENSES PER PARCEL** - Previous proposals allowed for only one cultivation license to be granted per parcel, regardless of the size of the parcel. *I recommend allowing multiple licenses per parcel. The first recommendation is to allow each license to allow the amount of square footage permitted under the above*

formulas, the secondary recommendation (dubbed the “More Permissive Project”) is to allow multiple licenses on a parcel, but the total square footage of all gardens combined must be less than or equal to the amount permitted under the above formula.

- ***NURSERIES*** - cannabis breeders and nurseries have significantly different needs for their sites. *I recommend that future regulations include a section creating a license type to correspond with the California state Type 4 nursery license.* These regulations should allow additional space not counted towards canopy limits to be used for non-commercial research and development.
- ***CONTINUITY OF OPERATION*** - in order to participate in licensing, existing cultivation operations need the option to continue operating while their applications are processed. As is already being prepared by the state (which intends to offer temporary licensing before the end of the year), *the county should offer some option to allow cultivators to enter the licensing application process while still continuing to cultivate.*
- ***DISTRIBUTION*** - licensed distributors will be required to broker any legal sale of cannabis. *The County should include a provision creating a license type for distributors as set forth in MAUCRSA.*
- ***INCENTIVES AND GRADUATED LICENSING FEES*** - excessive initial licensing fees will discourage participation in the programing. *Reasonable licensing rates will be effective to assist in more applicants. In addition, incentivize, organic-equivalent cultivation, compassion programs, living wage employment and participation by women, people of color, and historically marginalized groups.*
- ***ALIGNMENT WITH STATE LAW***- conflicting local and state law consistently creates confusion and accidental non-compliance with regulations. *I recommend that any regulations passed are written to mirror state law, and particularly MAUCRSA to the greatest extent possible.*

I recognize that unregulated cannabis gardens are the greatest danger to the County’s environment, and therefore achieving a high level of participation will be the key to any regulatory programs effectiveness. *I believe that including these additions to any future county cannabis regulations will help maximize participation while also allowing the local cannabis industry to operate successfully.*

Sincerely,

Nathan Johnson