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February 6, 2018

Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors

ATTN:

Joan Hartmann, Chair

Das Williams, Vice Chair

Janet Wolf

Peter Adam

Steve Lavagnino

105 East Anapamu Street

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors:

As a long-time Goleta resident located in the Winchester Canyon area, I am concerned about unintended consequences and negative impacts of cannabis operations to our neighborhood communities. If growing operations are approved in agricultural areas adjacent to Goleta neighborhoods, there may be potential impacts to people and environment (e.g., odor pollution, impacts on creek water quality, etc.) as well as potential increase in crime related to cannabis growing,

1. Odor Pollution

Can the Board guarantee that cannabis operations will not negatively impact residents with odor pollution? This is especially true for Goleta residential neighborhoods bordering Santa Barbara county land.

Will there be acceptable setbacks from adjacent residential areas to eliminate all negative odor pollution impacts?

For neighborhoods in low lying areas, has the Board considered that odor pollution may be concentrated by weather conditions or surrounding hills similar to what happens with smog located within basins?

A recent New York Times article "Legal Marijuana is Almost Here. If Only Pot Farmers Were on Board (Sept. 9, 2017)" states that when a police reconnaissance helicopter looked at a marijuana farm, "the pungent smell of marijuana plants filled the cabin, wafting up from 800 feet below."

2. Ground Water and Watershed Contamination

In agricultural areas utilizing well water, could cannabis operation water management affect the quality of our groundwater basins? Could cannabis operations negatively impact the goal of our County's Project Clean Water?

According to Oregon Department of Agriculture's document "Oregon Cannabis: Cannabis and Water Quality," two important rules apply to all agricultural products:

- Pollution Rule: Agricultural pollution cannot enter streams, ditches, or ponds, or be in a location that is likely to enter these water bodies.
- Riparian Rule: Agricultural activities must not prevent streamside vegetation from growing and establishing.

This document goes on to state that “Excavation of grow sites must not contribute sediment to streams, ...” and that “Dumping excess irrigation water into a stream, ditch, or pond is prohibited.”

Creek waters flow through Winchester Canyon and groundwater lies below.

Will creek water be safe for animals, including sensitive animals such as existing frogs, and for children playing in the creek?

Will our water basin be protected? Safeguarded?

3. Crime

According to the Lompoc Record (Dec. 30, 2017), as “more of the high-dollar crop is planted in 2018, more opportunities will exist for thieves looking to make a quick buck, sheriff’s officials said.” This article was part of the “Cannabis on the Central Coast - Looking at land use, money, science, law enforcement and education series.”

If licenses will be approved in Santa Barbara County, I request that the number of licenses be limited, that growing sites be located far away from residential neighborhoods, and growing facilities at each approved site be meticulously and frequently monitored for unintended negative impacts on neighborhoods, our residents, and our environment, including our limited water resources. I also request that procedures be put in place to suspend or terminate any cannabis operation not in compliance with regulations and, for terminated operations, at the cannabis operation’s expense, remediate the lands back to an acceptable condition as determined by county authorities.

Sincerely,

Louise Keeler
Winchester Canyon resident