



City of Seattle

Michael McGinn  
Mayor

Sally J. Clark  
Council President

September 30, 2013

Governor Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles  
219 John A. Cherberg Building  
PO Box 40436  
Olympia, WA 98504-0436

Representative Roger Goodman  
JLOB 328  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

**Re: Cannabis Regulation and Successful Implementation of Initiative 502**

Dear Gov. Inslee, Sen. Kohl-Welles and Rep. Goodman,

As the City of Seattle moves to regulate the location of cannabis-related production, processing and retail activity in the city, we write to request further action by the State to appropriately regulate medical cannabis.

Our letter is prompted by a meeting on September 13 here at City Hall organized by Senator Kohl-Welles that brought together elected officials and representatives of the Liquor Control Board, Department of Health, and City and King County agencies. Representative Goodman also attended the meeting.


Regulations for cannabis for general adult use will soon be in place through the implementation of Initiative 502, but the production and distribution of medical cannabis continues to operate in, at best, a gray market. Medical cannabis dispensaries have proliferated across Seattle. While many of their clients live with conditions ameliorated by medical cannabis, the vast majority do not and would be better served through the access made possible by Initiative 502. If relatively easy access to medical cannabis continues, the goals and potential of Initiative 502 will be undermined.


We believe it is in the best interests of Seattle and the state to coordinate and improve regulation of the entire cannabis market, medical and recreational. This could mean combining the general adult cannabis market and the medical cannabis markets into a single, regulated system. The continued existence of separate cannabis markets could sustain unregulated markets (competing against Initiative 502 outlets) and compromise public health and safety. We also believe the State should make certain that the legitimate needs of medical cannabis users are met. Patients deserve a system that supports development of medicines appropriate to different conditions and at a price point patients can afford.


In its recent guidance memorandum concerning marijuana enforcement, the United States Department of Justice made clear that cities and states with legalized marijuana must have serious and effective regulatory schemes, on paper and in practice. Allowing a continued gray market is not consistent with this direction. We encourage you to act quickly to reconcile these markets. We also ask that you ensure there are sufficient resources available for local law enforcement to curtail activities outside the regulatory environment.

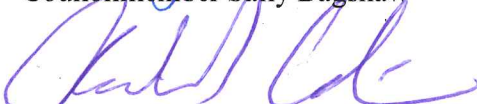
Managing social change of this magnitude requires careful public policy. We appreciate your thoughtful review of these issues and look forward to partnering with you as we build a solid regulatory framework for cannabis in our community.


Sincerely,

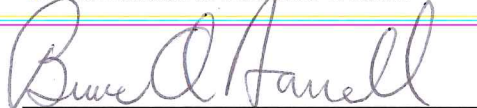
  
Council President Sally J. Clark

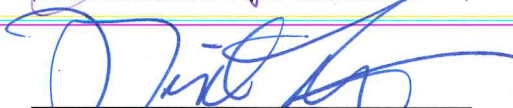
  
Councilmember Sally Bagshaw


  
Councilmember Tim Burgess

  
Councilmember Richard Conlin


  
Councilmember Jean Godden

  
Councilmember Bruce A. Harrell

  
Councilmember Nick Licata

  
Councilmember Mike O'Brien

  
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen

  
City Attorney Peter Holmes

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Cc: Members, Washington State Legislature from Seattle  
Members, Washington State Liquor Control Board  
Rick Garza, Director, WSLCB  
Alison Holcomb, Criminal Justice Project Director, ACLU of Washington