

November 10, 2009

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,

RE: MEDICAL MARIJUANA COOP ORDINANCE DRAFT

This Ordinance draft for Medical Marijuana Coops was obviously written by someone(s) who has little, if any, compassion for the patients and people with disabilities who rely on cannabis for their maladies and pain. It blatantly throws "due process" out the window, repeatedly insults the United States Constitution, and shamelessly disregards the rights of patients.

I personally experienced the horrible deaths of both my mother and step-mother from cancer. Neither was a pretty picture. If I could have eliminated or at least reduced their suffering in any way, it would have been wonderful. Unfortunately, cannabis as medicine was wrongfully not allowed as medicine. It is now, and we should do everything we can to alleviate the needless suffering in this world.

I know many people with disabilities and other maladies who can't take other medications but find that this one helps their situation. There is good reason that the people of California voted to allow cannabis as a medication. We must never forget that a patient could be your mother, your sister, your friend or your son. While abuse does happen, we don't deprive cancer patients of morphine because others abuse it. The same principal applies here.

This whole situation has no business in the "criminal arena." If this ordinance becomes too restrictive, then provisions for the medicine will gravitate back to the gangs. After all, it has been one of their main sources of funding.

Medical marijuana is a health issue and should be governed by the Health Department. This is the only way that the unwarranted stigma will finally be dissolved. Patients should not need to feel ashamed, afraid or embarrassed. Living in fear is no way to resolve health problems.

I do not believe that the City has the option of totally banning these facilities as exemplified by a recent court decision in the City of Los Angeles. And, overly zealous restrictions that have the same effect of creating a ban may become a litigation minefield--which this City can ill-afford.

Per Prop 215, the State has been "encourage(d) to implement a plan to provide for the safe and affordable distribution of marijuana to all patients in medical need of marijuana". The State has not done its part. I iterate my plea to the Council, City Attorney, City Prosecutor, Health Director and any other entity befuddled by this mess. They should be focusing their energies towards compelling the State to comply with this mandate--the will of the people of California.

Diana Lejins  
Advocates for Disability Rights

Working to make the World a better place,  
diana ☺