



CITY OF LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

July 27, 2018

The Honorable Steven Bradford
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2062
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 1294 (Bradford): Cannabis: State and Local Equity Programs

Dear Senator Bradford:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in support of SB 1294 (Bradford). This bill proposes to require the Bureau of Cannabis Control to provide grants, upon appropriation of funds by the Legislature, to local jurisdictions to assist equity applicants and licensees in gaining entry to and successfully operating in the cannabis marketplace. The City of Long Beach recognizes social equity as a core focus of cannabis policymaking and has taken legislative steps to support equal opportunity in the cannabis industry.

On July 10, 2018, as part of a Commercial Adult-Use Cannabis Business Ordinance, the Long Beach City Council adopted a Cannabis Social Equity Program ("Equity Program"). The Equity Program provides benefits and assistance to individuals and communities most impacted by the criminalization of cannabis. The Equity Program will be coordinated by the Office of Cannabis Oversight, the Office of Equity, and the Pacific Gateway Workforce Innovation Network. The Equity Program will provide two major benefits to equity individuals: (1) Equity Business Ownership Assistance and 2) Employment Opportunities. To qualify for the program, an individual must be low income and meet additional eligibility criteria based on geography, cannabis conviction history or employment status.

The Equity Program will help equity individuals open a cannabis business by providing fee waivers, expedited application and plan check review, business license tax deferrals, and application workshops. The Equity Program will also provide additional support by requiring all non-equity cannabis businesses to submit plans on how they intend to support equity businesses and disadvantaged Long Beach communities. With respect to employment opportunities, the Equity Program will require all non-equity cannabis businesses to ensure that at least 40% of total annual work hours are performed by equity individuals. Lastly, the Equity Program will host fresh start clinics to assist individuals in the reclassification, dismissal, or expungement of certain cannabis-related convictions.

SB 1294 will further advance the goals of social equity by supporting local efforts to promote equal opportunity in the cannabis industry. Through these efforts, California can become the model for other states looking to regulate the cannabis industry in a fair and responsible manner.

Given these reasons, the City of Long Beach supports AB 1294 (Bradford).

Sincerely,

Patrick H. West
CITY MANAGER

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Ricardo Lara, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Janet Nguyen, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District