



Denver's Social Consumption Coalition

March 12, 2019

Members of Denver City Council:

Please accept this letter from over 2 dozen business owners as interest in starting a cannabis consumption business in Denver under Initiative 300. We have come together collectively as a budding industry to ask your support in modifying the proximity setbacks to 500 feet for Denver's Social Consumption Initiative. The 1,000 foot setback from schools as approved by the voters would remain in place.

We are professionals, entrepreneurs, and community members who have viable businesses with which we can successfully overlay cannabis consumption. The common thread that unites us all in this letter is that there are no viable locations for us to open our businesses under the proximity rules as they currently exist today.

There has been much discussion around the viability of I300 and whether there are viable business models. There has been a tendency to blame the failure of the program on the lack of interest. We stand united together in saying the biggest obstacle we are all facing is finding a suitable location from which we can operate. We come to you in full agreement that the distance requirements put forward by the Department of Excise and Licensing have been, by far, our biggest hurdle in being able to acquire a social consumption license. We simply cannot get past the real estate agent.

What about the children?

We urge you to realize that Denver cannot stop social consumption from happening. It is a movement that is happening nationwide. You can only stop it from being successfully regulated in Denver and protecting the populations, including children, who none of us want witnessing consumption. It is happening all over this city without fire protection, ventilation, or monitoring for intoxication. Every operator who has signed on to this letter has done so with compliance at the forefront of all our minds. Compliance means consumption may not be visible from any vantage point a child has, whether they are in the car driving by the property or in the stroller walking by with a parent...consumption cannot be visible per the program's rules. This is the opposite of what we have today by default with a culture that now promotes citizens and tourist alike to consume in the street, in alleys, in parks and their cars because there is simply no place for them to go.

We would also like to assure you that loosening the distance requirements will not instigate a flood of social consumption businesses. Running a consumption business is not for everyone and certainly not

for the faint of heart. Once a viable location is identified, the business must secure a lease from the owner allowing onsite consumption, we must obtain neighborhood support before running an application through the gauntlet of agencies for approval for fire, health and safety, ventilation, police, zoning, public health and more. Finally, we must then go through a public hearing where anyone who feels they may be harmed by a consumption business in their neighborhood has the opportunity to make their case before the Director of Excise and Licenses issues a final decision on whether or not to grant the license.

Instead, providing reasonable proximity restrictions that are consistent with alcohol, will allow good operators who desire to be fully compliant with the program, to bring social consumption out from the underground where it can be regulated and made safe for all. We can provide public service solutions to the very real problem of people consuming in parks in front of children and out front of business on sidewalks and other rights-of-way.

We urge you to modify the setbacks. Making them consistent with those of alcohol will honor the will of the voters and allow the program to function as it was designed. Thank you again for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Denver's Social Consumption Industry

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