

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN AND
HILDA L. SOLIS

July 13, 2021

Revisiting the Recommendations on Cannabis Regulation in LA County

In November 2016, California voters approved Proposition 64, the “Adult Use of Marijuana Act,” which approved the legalization of recreational cannabis in California beginning in January 2018. Proposition 64 passed in Los Angeles County with 59.5% percent of the vote, higher than the overall rate of 57.1% in California.

In response to the proposition’s passage, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) established the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) which now resides within the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA). The OCM convened the Los Angeles County Advisory Working Group on Cannabis Regulation (Working Group) to develop recommendations for cannabis regulation in unincorporated L.A. County. The Working Group conducted extensive community outreach and held eight public convenings to deliberate on the various components of cannabis legalization.

At the end of the process, the Working Group presented a set of 64 recommendations to the Board that were meant to provide a framework for the

MOTION

MITCHELL	_____
KUEHL	_____
HAHN	_____
BARGER	_____
SOLIS	_____

development of cannabis regulations in unincorporated L.A. County. The recommendations were presented in the report titled “Recommendations Report: Los Angeles County Advisory Working Group on Cannabis Regulation” (Recommendations Report). In June, 2018, the DCBA presented the Board with options to remove the commercial cannabis ban and move forward with a process to legalize and regulate cannabis in the unincorporated areas. However, the Board opted to accept the report as a receive-and-file and not take any action to remove the cannabis ban.

In the three years since then, much has changed and evolved in the area of cannabis legalization. Multiple additional states have legalized recreational cannabis, bringing the total to 24 states; Canada became the first nation to legalize cannabis at a federal level; and the two biggest cities in L.A. County, Los Angeles and Long Beach, now allow commercial cannabis. It is clear that the rest of California, and the nation as a whole, is moving in the direction of legalizing, taxing, and regulating recreational cannabis. It is time for the Board to revisit what it would look like to remove the commercial cannabis ban in unincorporated L.A. County, and there are now many examples of jurisdictions who have already been through the process to learn from. The OCM should reconvene a group of subject-level experts to reexamine the recommendations for cannabis regulation in the Recommendations Report and update them based on all the new information that has emerged in the last three years.

LA County voted more than four years ago to legalize recreational cannabis. While the process to legalize and regulate cannabis retail, manufacturing, distribution, and growth will be complex, we have learned enough over the last three years to enhance and improve the original recommendations made by the OCM. It is time to take the

Recommendations Report off the shelf and relook at what it would take to remove the ban on commercial cannabis in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

WE, THEREFORE MOVE direct the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) and its Office of Cannabis Management (OCM), in consultation with the Chief Executive Office, Department of Public Health, County Counsel, Department of Regional Planning, Department of Public Works, Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures, Treasurer Tax Collector, the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative, and all other relevant departments, to revisit the 2017 report titled “Recommendations Report: Los Angeles County Advisory Working Group on Cannabis Regulation” and report back with updated recommendations for cannabis retail, manufacturing, distribution, growth, testing, regulation, and enforcement in Los Angeles County in 120 days. The updated recommendations should be rooted in an equity framework and should review best practices to take into account lessons learned from other jurisdictions that have already legalized commercial cannabis.

#

JH: kc