

From: Rebecca Rapp [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 1:58 PM
To: Mary Salas <MSalas@chulavistaca.gov>; John McCann <jmccann@chulavistaca.gov>; Jill Galvez <jmgalvez@chulavistaca.gov>; Steve C. Padilla <spadilla@chulavistaca.gov>; Andrea Cardenas <acardenas@chulavistaca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment: New details show sprawling web of corruption in Southern California cannabis licensing

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Good evening, Mayor Salas and council members, my name is Becky Rapp. I'm a public health educator concerned with the lack of prevention messaging regarding the marijuana industry. I cannot attend in person tonight but wanted to send my comments in hopes of consideration.

It seems the marijuana industry has the ear of the city as every policy that moves forward seems to benefit those profiting. Many local doctors working on the front lines of the mental health crisis have stated their concerns along with new, current studies that point to the detrimental harms high-potency marijuana can have, especially on the developing brain. Information that should not be ignored. I can't help but wonder why.

An article posted in the LA times last week titled, "New details show sprawling web of corruption in Southern California cannabis licensing." The article describes how California lawmakers called for a statewide task force to crack down on corruption. Details are emerging in a bribery scandal and pay-to-play schemes. The counties that have been investigated are the Inland Empire, San Gabrielle Valley, and Southwest Los Angeles County.

The article goes on to describe that in some instances, government officials took on dual roles as lobbyists or consultants for pot interests. In fact, more than a dozen government officials statewide received income, ranging from thousands of dollars to hundreds of thousands from marijuana companies or had interests in pot businesses while still in office.

In no way am saying the city is involved in backyard transactions with the marijuana industry but it is curious as to why policy gets approved to profit in the industry and the community voice along with local healthcare professionals seems to be ignored. Perhaps more prevention messaging and counter-advertising would be appropriate, sending the message that you're listening.

Thank you