

Honorable Mono County Supervisors,

I want reconsideration of placing a ban on the cultivation of industrial hemp. This crop is now an agricultural commodity, legalized by the Farm Bill and regulated by the USDA. California Food and Agriculture has also submitted their final regulations for approval, yet local government is banning this option and stopping any possible momentum. I consider this action an affront on my cultural legacy and rights as an American farmer.

Hemp played an important role in the development of the United States, with its multitude of uses, was a staple of farming. In fact, the colonist government used to require hemp to be planted; Jefferson saw the benefits of hemp, in contrast to tobacco, and he declared hemp essential for the wealth of the Nation. Thereby, European hemp was commercially cultivated in the Americas from 1645-1937 (though wild hemp and first peoples cultivation practices stemming from the Spanish introduction to the Americas in 1500), until the passing of the kleptocratic, oligarchical, racist policy of the 'Marihuana Tax Act'. In this case, there was vested interest via industrialists: Rockefeller's petroleum, Hearst's timber investments, etc., so their banker, Mellon, provided his nephew in-law, Henry Anslinger, of the newly formed Federal Bureau of Narcotics, \$100,000 to draft policy and propaganda, typically directed at people of color- Hearst was happy to help with the circulation of this propaganda through his newspaper, whereby congress quoted these ideologies while passing the legislature. Hemp is not an unknown, new species. It has been cultivated for 12,000 years, and has been a part of every culture, so despite the high tax to grow, pricing folks out of the market, there is a primal understanding of its essential uses, so war time efforts saw revitalization of hemp- innovation began, and Ford, for instance, completed an entirely hemp plastic, hemp fueled vehicle. In 1945, CBD was identified, and isolated in 1963, followed by THC being isolated. The medical therapeutic discoveries were not new, having been used as medicine for thousands of years; the 1972 Narcotics Act was the death knell, lumping hemp into the schedule 1 category: no medicinal value. The current state of affairs feels like a war. Rockefellers petroleum has brought a legacy of products that pollute; Hearst's lumber has been clear cut, or at this point burned, and the political ideologies are also returning. We face environmental and financial catastrophes in the years to come. Hemp offers a sustainable crop to regenerate this atmosphere: financially, environmentally, and equitably. This staple of a farm element offers diversification to other community providing foods and implements.

There seems to be some bearing that the RPAC's workshop vote decided community direction towards a ban, regulation, or pilot program etc. A better indicator would be an electoral vote, which covers much more of the voting population. Proposition 64 passed in all of the County's districts, and allowed regulation into both recreational cannabis and industrial hemp. Just as SB 94 finessed the recreational market, SB 566 has done the same for hemp. However, though passed through Prop. 64 together, they should not be conflated. Hemp, Cannabis Linn., is in the same Cannabaceae family as Sativa and Indica, hops are another cousin in this family- an unregulated medicinal plant now used to bitter alcohol beer. The evolutionary divergence led

to one plant having chemical transcription CBD, and the other THC- though there are thousands of other chemical synthesis also inherent. In contrast to THC, where different strains offer numerous terpene profiles, but still have the purpose of gaining high concentrated psychoactive, hemp can be broken into main types: grain/seed, fibre, and flower.

I understand there are concerns of cross pollination, but as the market is trending towards CBD flower cultivar, as the appropriate infrastructure for cordage or food processing is not present, having been dismantled with prohibition. Without this supply chain established, flower is the only viable industry. Thereby, cross pollination should be a limited concern. As a diploid species, a male must pollinate a female plant in order to seed. Thereby, if the cultivar is CBD flower, the plant is strictly female, and cannot cross pollinate. If there are concerns that a producer was to cultivate a grain or fiber hemp variety, as a 3000 square mile county, full of geographic barriers, the chance of cross pollination of these cultivars is site specific, and should be handled as such. Further, the list of CDFA approved cultivars all have assigned separations to preclude pollination drift, and regardless of all these factors, the divergent species of hemp from sativa/indica does not always mean that genetic flow is even possible if there were to be drift, any more possible than a person stressing a cannabis plant hermaphroditic.

The origins of Cannabis Linn are similar to the region of Mono County, and offers a plant that is acclimated to the area. This reduces stressors and pests, and limits the needs of both nutrient and water inputs- a cannabis plant is able to grow in depleted soils, with high alkaline contents. A CBD flower operation is managed much like a THC flower operation, except the chemical synthesis is different. CBD flower utilizes manual labor, low input intensity, and offers a sustainable price per acre. Though awkward to compare hemp to alfalfa, the main commodity in Mono, in lieu of cotton or timber, nonetheless a typical flower hemp farm averages 2570 m³/ton of water, and fibre and grain use 300-1500 m³/ton; in contrast to the main commodity locally, alfalfa, which uses 955 m³/ton. However, hemp flower is a finished product in place after light manual harvesting and processing, offering up to \$300/lbs, and also has the ability to cross state lines for sale. This is not true with alfalfa, priced at .15 cents/lbs., which after mechanical harvesting and processing, is typically shipped to a Southern California equestrian facility or Central valley feed lot. If these resources are lucky enough to transfer energy to a food supply, a typical cow consumes 15,415 m³/ton of water, and is sold at \$1.50/lbs- not including the transportation cost, processing costs, ethical costs etc.. Even much of our rangeland cattle do not have slaughter or packing facilities, and are shipped for processing, and not a deliverable product as hemp flower or grain would be. Please recognize the enhancing qualities of this crop and how it can be integrated into the fields of Mono County. I currently am in cultivation of a small cottage outdoor cannabis operation. Including a CBD flower operation would enable a year-round growing atmosphere via placement in hoop houses and other technological advances that allow different growing methodology than is typical in industrial agriculture.

There are currently 15 agriculture operators in Mono County, and as stated by the Agriculture Commissioner, dozens inquired about hemp cultivation in Mono County. To see a ban on potentially new farmers and a revitalization of farming, and blighted, undeveloped, forgotten communities, is disheartening. Mono County regulates recreational cannabis via Chapter 13 and 5.60, Federally illegal, but has banned hemp, Federally legal. It is already difficult enough to start a farm, but a cannabis sat./ind. farm is an entirely different framework, shut off to any Federal tied money- which is everything. Hemp provides access to loans for operating or ownership, such as housing and infrastructure, also insurance, grants or conservation assistance, etc. There is access to any Federal program established in the Farm Bill, can be shipped interstate. Industrial hemp should be embraced as a new opportunity for access to a struggling market- where land prices are high, low market access and high transportation costs, lack of infrastructure. Hemp should be regulated by the State framework, with the Agricultural Commissioner processing the application and performing what is required by the hemp statutes. Right to Farm should be able to proceed alongside the new development of an agriculture commodity.

Please realize this is another opportunity to allow people to continue living in the area and performing cultivation that should arguably never have been prohibited to being with. Why is this being banned? Whose vested interests are we protecting? This could offer a possibility for folks to make a sustainable income with legal protections. There could be a revitalization of depressed areas that have not had any investment in decades. THC cannabis is still too controversial for the status quo, not being a part of the cultural norm, and having so much baggage placed on it through the Drug Wars. A war on drugs is a war on people. Hemp should not inherit the same stigmas; it has been used through our American History in every facet- from the first flags to the paper of the Constitution. There are no psychoactive qualities- the trace amounts of THC are inhibited by the CBD receptors. The many uses make a diversified marketed crop- fibre going for clothing, or building materials and plastics, grain being a food source, flower being a medicine. There are 10,000 uses for this amazing plant, please allow a way for change. Though there is currently no infrastructure to process fibre or grain, and countries that were not foresighted, or completely racist and corrupt, continued this production and have the facilities to handle this type of commodity. It is true we do not have access to this markets, but we do have one of the most robust flower markets in the world, and hemp is able to participate in interstate commerce, enhancing the potential growth. This would allow farmers to begin cultivation and relationships, get infrastructure in place, and start with a cash crop that would begin exploration into the industry. Eventually, the implements for processing will be more available, and at that point pollinating varieties would be viable to cultivate. Regardless, grain food could be started now as an option of industrial hemp, with cottage processing of seed, so if there are large investments into a flower variety, both CBD and THC, as a sinsemilla harvest is needed for optimal concentrations, then area policy plans should guide these decisions.

There are precedents of General Plan and Area Plans guiding policy bans, such as short-term rentals in June Lake or Swall Meadows, and some neighborhoods having quotas of how many are allowed, and also General Plan aspects, such as Antelope Valley not being a part of the Dark Sky ordinance. If there is hesitancy towards hemp infringing on other's livelihoods, an area ban seems appropriate. Mono County is too large and diverse to blanket this policy towards a commodity agriculture crop. There are many other alternatives to a Municipal Code ban that does not put stresses on staff resources, and at a certain point when is there going to be a change of what can business do to help the county, to what can the county do to help foster new businesses? A start would be to actually allow some of them to begin the process of securing a plan, as with a ban there is no incentive to plan for entry. If there are community centric concerns, there are tools available to address those specific concerns. This would have been a simple award to the people who have been prejudiced culturally because of this prohibition, and to start up farmers who struggle with land acquisition, marketable areas, finding housing, and the harsh realities of farming in the Eastern Sierra.

I have been wanting to grow hemp since my first introduction via an 8th grade research paper- I had George Washington on the cover with the comic bubble "I grew hemp". I moved back to this area specifically because of this potential new industry and the opportunity to grow food and herbal medicinal for the community I want to be a part of developing a local food system that contributes to the area and reduces impacts to the environment, provides an honest livelihood, and gives help to those in need.

I appreciate your time and considerations towards not banning industrial hemp.

Regards,

Jake Suppa, Shanti Co 13