



*California Chapter of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws
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To: S.F. Board of Supervisors

Re: Proposed Ban on Cannabis Smoking and Vaping in Private Apartments

On behalf of the many San Franciscans who use cannabis for medicine and enjoyment, we urge that restrictions on cannabis smoking and vaping in private apartments be dropped from any proposed anti-smoking ordinance.

The proposed ordinance would constitute a de facto ban on cannabis use for most San Francisco residents. Unlike tobacco, which can be smoked outside on public streets, cannabis consumption is illegal in all public places under state law (CA HSC 11362.3 (a)1). The proposed ordinance would thus leave apartment dwellers with no legal place to enjoy marijuana. (Oral consumption is not an acceptable alternative; inhalation provides much prompter relief, and is far less liable to cause over-dosage).

An exemption for medical cannabis only is unacceptable. Obtaining a doctor's recommendation is costly and inconvenient, especially in this time of COVID; likewise obtaining an official state medical cannabis ID card. Private, adult use of cannabis is no more dangerous to public health than medical use.

The scientific evidence is clear that cannabis does not present a secondhand smoke hazard like tobacco. Unlike tobacco, not a single human study has found second-hand cannabis smoke or vaping to be harmful to health. Unlike tobacco, first-hand cannabis smoking has been shown not to cause lung cancer [1] or cardiovascular disease [2] in numerous human studies. Second-hand exposure is therefore all the less likely to be harmful. Anti-smoking alarmists, funded by the state's tobacco tax, are trying to scare the public with junk science studies alleging traces of toxins in marijuana smoke – without mentioning that the amounts are so small as to have no adverse impact on human health [3]. In general, cannabis users tend to smoke much smaller quantities than tobacco smokers. In addition, cannabis smoke does not leave behind prolonged, residual “third-hand” odors like nicotine.

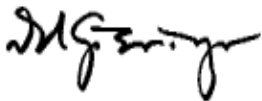
Including vapes in a secondhand smoking ban is even more unjustified. Vaporization has been show to eliminate 95%-99.99% of all smoke toxins, both in marijuana and tobacco [4]. In addition, vaporizers drastically reduce secondhand side-stream emissions and don't involve lighters, matches, fire, smoke and ashes. Not a single human study has demonstrated harm from second-hand vape exposure.

The proposed ordinance inordinately impacts lower-income and minority residents who can't afford their own homes. San Francisco has long been a leader on human rights, social tolerance and cannabis issues. The city can be proud of having been a leader of marijuana reform and a refuge for medical marijuana patients under Prop. 215. Evicting tenants for smoking marijuana will scarcely improve the city's homelessness crisis. The city is large enough to provide 100% odor-free apartments for those who are smoke-sensitive, while allowing freedom for others to enjoy marijuana in different units (with proper ventilation, they need not even be in separate sections of the building). In any case, anti-smoking rules should target second-hand emissions that penetrate others' spaces, not what goes on in residents' own apartments.

The city of West Hollywood recently rejected a proposal to ban cannabis smoking in multi-unit dwellings. San Francisco should do likewise. For over forty years, San Francisco has been a beacon of tolerance for marijuana users. To trash this tradition now is an insult to countless long-term renters who can't afford their own homes.

In closing, we respectfully urge the Board to delete marijuana from any proposed ban on smoking in residential apartments.

Sincerely,



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REFERENCES:

[1] The National Academy of Sciences report on “The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids” (2017) concluded there is no correlation between cannabis use and lung, head, or neck cancers.

[2] Regarding cardiovascular disease, the following recent studies were all negative:
 Auer R et al, “Lifetime marijuana use and subclinical atherosclerosis,” *Addiction* 2018.
 Reis JR et al, “Cumulative Lifetime Marijuana Use and Incident Cardiovascular Disease in Middle Age,”

Am J. Public Health 2017 Apr 107(4):601-6.

San Luis C et al, "Association Between Recent Cannabinoid Use and Acute Ischemic Stroke," *Neurology Clinical Practice* Jun 3, 2020.

Jakob J et al, "Association between marijuana use on electrocardiographic abnormalities by middle age," *Addiction* 2020 Jul 10.

[3] Cal NORML Release: "CA DPH Misrepresents Cannabis Smoke and Vape Hazards Using Anti-Tobacco Funding" <https://www.canorml.org/is-ca-spending-anti-tobacco-tax-money-to-make-specious-claims-about-marijuana-and-second-hand-smoke/>

[4] *Demonstrating efficacy of cannabis vapes:*

Gieringer D et al: "Cannabis Vaporizer Combines Efficient Delivery of THC with Effective Suppression of Pyrolytic Compounds," *Journal of Cannabis Therapeutics* 2004.

Meehan-Atrash J et al., "Aerosol Gas-Phase Components from Cannabis E-Cigarettes and Dabbing: Mechanistic Insight and Quantitative Risk Analysis," *ACS Omega* Sept 16, 2019.

Similar findings for nicotine vapes:

Goniewicz et al, "Level of selected carcinogens and toxicants in vapour from electronic cigarettes," *Tobacco Control* Mar 6, 2013.

Burstyn I, "Peering through the mist: systematic review of what the chemistry of contaminants in electronic cigarettes tells us about health risks," *BMC Public Health* 2014, 14:18.

[Cal NORML analysis of specious claims about second-hand marijuana smoke.](#)

[Study: Marijuana Use History Not Independently Associated With Atherosclerosis](#)

[Study: Cannabis Use Not Associated With Increased Risk Of Cardiovascular Disease](#)