

Communication from Public

Name: Sarah Armstrong
Date Submitted: 01/19/2025 12:25 PM
Council File No: 24-1584
Comments for Public Posting: ASA's Letter of Support is attached.

To: The Honorable Members of the Government Oversight Committee & The Honorable Karen Bass
From: Sarah Armstrong, JD

California Legislative Coordinator - Americans for Safe Access (ASA)

Re: Tuesday, January 21, 2025, Agenda Item No. 6 CF No. 24-1584 – Relating to a Report Back on the Issuance of Temporary Cannabis Event Licenses and Cannabis Consumption Lounge Licenses

Date: January 17, 2025

Americans for Safe Access (ASA) respectfully submits the comments below, and hopes that the honorable members of the Government Operations Committee and Mayor Bass, will take into consideration the needs of medical cannabis patients and support a report back on Cannabis Consumption Lounges and Cannabis Event Licenses.

Although cannabis can be legally purchased at a variety of licensed venues in Los Angeles, per state law it cannot be consumed anywhere in public. Hotels and rental cars have similar restrictions and impose excessive fines when they detect the odor of smoke, whatever its source. Thus, cannabis patients visiting the City face a de facto ban on the consumption of their medicine.

While consumption lounges, which have proven to be safe, quiet and clean venues via the mechanism of local ordinances are available in different parts of the state, Los Angeles has fallen prey to the horrors of non-licensed venues, which in at least one case, resulted in the robbery/murder of an individual exiting an unlicensed consumption event. See: <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/police-respond-to-reported-shooting-in-hollywood/>

By licensing cannabis events and consumption lounges meaningful protections for patrons can be imposed, and we are confident that these new cannabis businesses can be effectively regulated so that they are as safe, clean and quiet as the licensed dispensaries they will be attached to. Years of operations in other cities have shown this to be the case.

Moreover, the unfair competition from neighboring jurisdictions like West Hollywood which do have consumption lounges and offer event licenses, ends. Residents who cannot consume in their homes, (typically apartment dwellers) will have safe regulated environments for consumption. The millions of tourists who visit Los Angeles each year (many are cannabis curious as they have limited safe access in their home states) will not be imposing olfactory distress on residents by lighting up public areas, unaware they are violating state law. Additional tax revenue means income which the City will desperately need as it rebuilds the areas recently destroyed by fire.

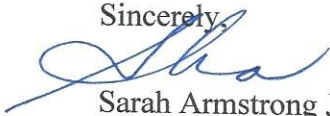
By passing a motion which requires a report back on the issue of consumption lounges and event licenses the City takes a meaningful step in eliminating the crime arising from unlicensed events, creates a path for

effective regulations which ensure the safety and comfort of residents, and most importantly begins the process of ensuring that medical cannabis patients, whether residents or visitors, have safe access to the legal consumption of their medicine.

For the reasons stated above, Americans for Safe Access (ASA) respectfully urges the Government Oversight Committee and Mayor Bass to support the motion for a report back on Cannabis Events and Consumption Lounges.

Founded in 2002, Americans for Safe Access (ASA) advocates for a national regulatory framework that invests in the development of standardized cannabis-based products, ensures a safe and consistent supply, fosters the integration of cannabis into patient treatment plans as a frontline medication, and encourages insurance coverage, as well as an end to employment, housing, parental and healthcare discrimination. You can read more about our organization at: <http://www.safeaccessnow.org>. Should there be any questions or concerns, I can be reached at: canwonk@gmail.com or (805) 279-8229.

Sincerely,



Sarah Armstrong JD
California Legislative Coordinator
Americans for Safe Access (ASA)

Cc: Michelle Garakian