

To: The Honorable Members of the Government Operations Committee

From: Sarah Armstrong, JD

California Legislative Coordinator - Americans for Safe Access (ASA)

Re: Tuesday, August 18, 2026, Agenda Item No. 3 CF No. 24-1584 – Relating to the Department of Cannabis Regulation Report Back on the Issuance of Temporary Cannabis Event Licenses and Cannabis Consumption Lounge Licenses

Date: August 17, 2026

Americans for Safe Access (ASA) respectfully submits the comments below, and hopes that the honorable members of the Government Operations Committee will take into consideration the needs of medical cannabis patients, and adopt the findings in the Department of Cannabis Regulation's Report and forward the report to the City Council for adoption.

The report by the Department of Cannabis Regulation is thorough and contains meaningful outreach to entities already involved in both cannabis consumption lounges (CCLs) and cannabis event licensing (CELs) for long periods of time. This deep dive did not uncover any negatives. Instead both CCL and CEL regulators in other jurisdictions indicated two important positive results: increased public safety and increased tax revenue.

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, despite the fact that cannabis consumption is legal in California.

Consumption lounges and cannabis events are even more important for cannabis patients who are City residents. Most patients live in shared housing, typically apartments. In order to obtain residency, they typically have to sign a rental agreement with the landlord, which bans the consumption of their medicine on the premises. Thus, patients because they have no alternatives, such as a consumption lounge, may have to choose between their medicine and eviction. This Hobson's Choice, typically disparately impacts the poor, as those who own their own homes, are not subject to a rental agreement with a landlord.

Licensed consumption lounges and event venues, have proven to be safe over a long period of time due to the mechanism of local ordinances. In contrast, Los Angeles has fallen prey to the horrors of non-licensed venues. In at least one case, this 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 have already been shown to be effective in other jurisdictions over a long period of time.

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, will have safe, regulated environments for consumption. The millions of tourists who visit Los Angeles each year will not be imposing olfactory distress on residents by lighting up public areas, unaware they are violating state law.

For the reasons stated above, Americans for Safe Access (ASA) respectfully urges the Government Oversight Committee to endorse the findings of the Department of Cannabis Regulation's Report and forward the document on to the Los Angeles City Council for adoption.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sarah", written over a horizontal line.

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

Cc: Michelle Garakian