

Venice is Negatively Affected by Marijuana Storefront Shops/Dispensaries

March 5, 2012

I support medical marijuana being available for people in need as defined by the Compassionate Use Act (CUA) of 1996 which provides for growing/obtaining medically prescribed marijuana.

However, I live in Venice and I am opposed to the multitude of unregulated marijuana shops operating here. After exploring these shops' operations and also talking with affected residents, business owners, LAPD, Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, and Government Attorneys, these shops appear to be more retail marijuana outlets than medically focused dispensaries, a distortion of the CUA which has negatively impacted Venice.

These shops:

Lack of Controls:

- 1) There is no agency regulating the quality of the marijuana sold. Unknown chemicals and additives are being ingested. What will be their effects?
- 2) There is no agency regulating the buying and selling of the marijuana. People can buy everyday from all the vendors. Some shops told me I could buy 6 ounces per day, one shop said a half pound per day. With 20 plus outlets in Venice that adds up to some 7 pounds per day. Is this supply being resold?
- 3) There seems to be little control in the issuing of Medical Marijuana ID cards. One shop offered me a card for \$40 and I would receive a bonus of 5 free joints upon payment. Other shops have hawkers on the sidewalks haranguing people to buy cards and pot.

Disproportionate Concentration of Shops in Venice:

I found 34 marijuana shops in Council District (CD) 11:

0 each in Palms, Playa Vista, Pacific Palisades

1 each in Mar Vista, Brentwood, Del Rey, Playa Del Rey

2 in West LA

4 in Westchester

24 in Venice. **70% of CD11 marijuana shops are in Venice while approximately 17% of CD11 population lives in Venice.**

While other parts of Los Angeles are seeing marijuana shops being closed, Venice is a hotbed of marijuana shop growth. Another opened in our Neighborhood last week.

Resulting Negative Effects on Venice:

- 1) I have seen people walk out of marijuana shops on Lincoln Bl and Pacific Ave and sell their pot to waiting teens.
- 2) I have seen people hand off their cards to others who then went into the same marijuana shop and purchased more pot.

- 3) One day while walking near a group of young people on Ocean Front Walk, the group welcomed a new arrival and told her the first thing she needed to do was get a marijuana card so she could earn some money.
- 4) Non-marijuana business owners have said that fewer tourists window shop or patronize their shops if a pot shop opens nearby. Loss of business revenue means loss of jobs and loss of City collected taxes.
- 5) Police Officers have told me that people use revenue from reselling pot to finance methamphetamine habits. This supports a second drug business.
- 6) Property theft is huge in Venice. Is there a correlation among thieves needing money for pot, accessible marijuana shops, and growing property theft?
- 7) The population of service resistant youth living on Venice streets consistently grows. How much of this is related to a ready source of marijuana?

Unregulated marijuana shops are having a negative effect on Venice and should be closed.

Thank you for your consideration,

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