



NOSSAMAN LLP | Memorandum

TO: The Honorable Chris Holden, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee

FROM: Nossaman LLP on behalf of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors

DATE: July 21, 2023

RE: **SB 508 (Laird) Cannabis: Licenses: California Environmental Quality Act - SUPPORT**

The County of Monterey is pleased to support Senate Bill (SB) 508 by Senator John Laird. This bill will streamline obtaining an annual cannabis license issued by the Department of Cannabis Control (DCC). Under the current framework to receive an annual license, two CEQA reviews are done on the same project (one at the local level and one at the state level). This bill will reduce it to one.

This bill aims to ensure those entering the regulated cannabis market remain by shortening the time and reducing the expense to obtain an annual license issued by the Department of Cannabis Control. Under SB 508, local jurisdictions will still be required to complete a CEQA review for a proposed cannabis business. The additional time and resources spent by applicants and DCC staff during this duplicative process after a local jurisdiction has completed CEQA slows licensure. Streamlining this process will improve the transition of thousands of provisional licenses to annual licenses. The DCC will continue to conduct a CEQA review where local project approval is ministerial.

The state desires to bring applicants into legal compliance by upcoming deadlines. This bill ensures that one barrier of entry, CEQA review, is streamlined for commercial cannabis licenses and will help reduce duplications while also increasing government efficiency.

For these reasons, the County of Monterey supports SB 508. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the County of Monterey's Public Policy Advisor, Ashley Walker of Nossaman LLP at 916-442-8888.

Sincerely,

Ashley Walker
Nossaman LLP

CC: Honorable John Laird, California State Senate, Author
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Consultants, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Casey Dunn, Assembly Republican Consultant
Hon. Dawn Addis, 30th Assembly District
Hon. Anna Caballero, 14th Senate District
Hon. Robert Rivas, 29th Assembly District
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
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