

IN THE MATTER OF: :
 :
Roundtable - Medical : Public
Cannabis Delivery : Hearing
Proposed Rulemaking :

Wednesday
January 6, 2021
The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
met via WebEx videoconference, Chairperson
Donovan W. Anderson presiding.

PRESENT :

DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
BOBBY CATO, JR., Member
RAFI ALIYA CROCKETT, Member
EDWARD S. GRANDIS, Member
JENI HANSEN, Member
JAMES SHORT, JR., Member
REMA WAHABZADAH, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

JASON ALDRICH
YVETTE ALEXANDER
SIMONE ANDREWS, DC ABRA Staff
COREY BARNETTE
MICHAEL BOBO
COURTNEY DAVIS
SHARA GIBSON
LINDA GREENE
BRYAN JACKSON
RABBI JEFFREY KAHN
NORBERT PICKETT
JENNIFER SNOWDEN
ERIC SPENCER
MILFORD WASHINGTON

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

10:33 a.m.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning, everyone. I am chairperson of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board of the District of Columbia, in accordance with DCR Section 25764, Office of Open Meetings Act.

I am welcoming you to our regular scheduled meeting of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. This meeting is being conducted pursuant to guidance made available by the District of Columbia's Office of Open Government regarding electronic meetings held by public bodies during the public health emergency.

Pursuant to this guidance, notice of today's meetings was provided 48 hours in advance of the meeting on ABRA's website and on the District's essential meeting calendar. The notice included the time, date, agenda and call in or log in information for public participation.

This electronic meeting is being hosted by a WebEx account provided by the District of Columbia Government. Please address any questions or concern, complaints, to the

1 oog@opengovoffice@dc.gov.

2 My name is Donovan Anderson, and I'm
3 Chairman of the Board. I would like to introduce
4 the other members of the board, who are also
5 participating electronically pursuant to Mayor's
6 Order 2020-054.

7 Please respond when I announce your
8 name. Mr. James Short?

9 MEMBER SHORT: Mr. James Short,
10 present.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Bobby Cato?

12 MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato, present.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Rema,
14 Wahabzadah?

15 MEMBER WAHABZADAH: Rema Wahabzadah
16 present.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Rafi
18 Crockett?

19 MEMBER CROCKETT: Rafi Crockett,
20 present.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Jennifer
22 Hansen?

23 MEMBER HANSEN: Jennifer Hansen,
24 present.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Ed Grandis?

1 MEMBER GRANDIS: Edward Grandis,
2 present.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: The Board has
4 seven Members in attendance for the conduct of
5 business today and that constitutes a quorum.

6 Before we get underway with today's
7 hearing calendar, I need to make a few
8 instructions very clear, so that the conduct of
9 these hearings is understood by everyone.

10 On this morning there is one agenda
11 item, which is the public hearing that we're
12 having today. We're having a list of witnesses.
13 And so what we will do today is that once we, I'm
14 going to call the name of the witness, our IT
15 specialist, Ms. Andrews, will elevate your rights
16 once your name is called.

17 We might be -- I'm not sure if
18 everyone's rights will be elevated throughout the
19 meeting, but to begin, we have a list of
20 witnesses who are going to testify today. And I
21 will call your name.

22 Your camera rights will be elevated by
23 our IT specialist at that time. So please bear
24 with us once I call your name, your rights will
25 be elevated.

1 I believe, because it's a public
2 hearing and we're going to ask questions, that
3 your rights will remain elevated throughout your
4 testimony because we will ask --

5 (Audio interference.)

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Although the
7 Board will now ask questions after testimony
8 (audio interference) as testify. One of the
9 things I will ask of participants, your rights
10 will be elevated once you have spoken, mute your
11 microphone if you are not speaking.

12 And I will remind all Board Members
13 and all members of the public who are
14 participating today, that if you are not
15 speaking, please mute your microphone. As I said
16 before, I believe that your rights will remain
17 elevated after you have testified. But we'll
18 see, since we're going to ask questions and I
19 need you to do that.

20 If you have any problems please,
21 during this time, please put a comment in the
22 chat. And also, if you also have technical
23 issues, please send an email to our IT
24 specialist, simone.andrews2@dc.gov.

25 This is our first hearing for the New

1 Year, so I would like to wish everyone a Happy
2 New Year and a pleasant New Year.

3 All right. So our first case is, our
4 first event that's in our calendar for the New
5 Year, it's a public hearing. It's a roundtable
6 on medical cannabis delivery proposed rulemaking.

7 Good morning, again, everyone. We
8 have had a great response to our roundtable
9 invitation, and I want to thank everyone for
10 their interest in attendance today.

11 For the record, notice of this
12 roundtable was published in the DC Registry on
13 December 25th, 2020 at 67 DCR 14828. The Board
14 has convened this roundtable to hear from medical
15 cannabis licensees, qualifying patients and their
16 care givers, and other interested parties
17 regarding their thoughts and concerns with
18 respect to medical cannabis deliveries and
19 curbside pickup.

20 The information that the board
21 receives today will be used to draft a future
22 medical cannabis delivery proposed rulemaking.
23 As you know, the Board is operating under the
24 emergency rules that was adopted on December 9th,
25 2020 regarding medical cannabis delivery. They

1 are set to expire on April 8th, 2021.

2 By way of background, the medical
3 cannabis delivery emergency rules were
4 implemented in response to the challenges that
5 qualifying patients in the District, and their
6 care givers, were having obtaining their
7 medication as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

8 During this period that Mayor Bowser
9 issues the stay at home orders, District
10 residents who are qualifying patients,
11 experienced difficulties obtaining their medical
12 cannabis and medical cannabis products.

13 In response, D.C. Health passed
14 emergency rules to allow dispensers to deliver to
15 qualifying patients and residents, or the
16 residents of their care givers.

17 The ABC Board has since amended the
18 D.C. Health rules to, one, increase the number of
19 permitted delivery vehicles from one to three,
20 two, require delivery drivers to be employees of
21 the dispensary, and three, expand the hours of
22 delivery from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., to 9:00
23 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

24 I will begin this hearing by calling
25 on those witnesses who registered in advance,

1 regarding their desires to address the Board.
2 The Board will then entertain comments from other
3 interested parties who did not register in
4 advance, but who wish to be heard.

5 Please know that given the amount of
6 interest that we received for this roundtable, I
7 must initially limit everyone to five minutes.
8 If there is time left at the end of session, I am
9 happy to entertain additional remarks.

10 I would ask that each of you to
11 identify yourself with your name before you speak
12 so that the court reporter records accurate and
13 attributable information in the transcript.

14 Lastly, you are also welcome to
15 supplement your comments with written testimony.
16 If you have prepared written remarks, please
17 email them to abra.legal@dc.gov. We will ensure
18 that they are properly filed with the Board's
19 official records.

20 We are on our witness list. And the
21 first witness who is scheduled to testify today
22 is Mr. Eric Spencer from the D.C. Democratic
23 Caucus for Returning Citizens.

24 Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate
25 the rights of Mr. Spencer please?

1 MS. ANDREWS: Sure. Mr. Spencer, your
2 rights have been elevated.

3 MR. SPENCER: Can everyone hear me?

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, we can
5 hear you, Mr. Spencer. Do you have a camera you
6 can --

7 MR. SPENCER: Yes, I have a camera but
8 I guess it's not letting me get on the camera.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, we can
10 wait a couple of minutes if you can try, if not,
11 we'll go forward with you without a camera. I
12 like to see who I'm --

13 MR. SPENCER: Yes. Absolutely.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- who's
15 addressing me. And since we aren't able to
16 participate in person, so we're doing this, of
17 course, remotely.

18 MR. SPENCER: I don't know if it's my
19 Wi-Fi or what have you. I can hear you and talk
20 --

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

22 MR. SPENCER: -- but I can't, just a
23 moment. One moment.

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

25 MR. SPENCER: One moment. Can

1 everyone see me now?

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, sir. Yes.

3 MR. SPENCER: Okay.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, we can see
5 you, Mr. Spencer. All right.

6 Thank you very much for appearing this
7 morning. As I stated, you have five minutes.
8 I'm going to have a timer and so please be, we
9 have several, we have on our calendar, I'm sorry,
10 on the witness list, there are 12 people
11 scheduled to testify this morning, so I set your
12 limit, your timings to a maximum of five minutes.

13 I'm going to have a timer. And I
14 might raise my hand when your five minutes have
15 expired. So, good morning, again, Mr. Spencer.
16 Please go ahead.

17 MR. SPENCER: Director, Members of the
18 Board and the public, good morning to everyone.
19 And thanks for allowing the DC Democratic Caucus
20 for Returning Citizens to present testimony or
21 comments on the notice of rulemaking for the
22 delivery of cannabis in the District of Columbia.

23 My name is Eric Spencer and I am the
24 secretary and policy holder. First I would like
25 to begin this testimony with the seriousness of

1 the situation by quoting D.C. Councilmember Elect
2 Robert White, on the current status of Returning
3 Citizens participation of the medical cannabis
4 program here in the District from an ownership
5 and equity status.

6 I quote, "we have locked up so many
7 Black people for marijuana, and I see it as
8 incredibly hypocritical for these folks to return
9 from prison on marijuana charges just to come
10 back to a place that has now legalized and
11 industrialized it so they can't play a role."

12 The Caucus believes that councilmember
13 rules applied with full force for this notice of
14 rulemaking for delivery as it pertains to
15 ownership and equity and not --

16 (Audio interference.)

17 MR. SPENCER: While the Caucus does
18 not take issue with the delivery of the cannabis
19 by dispensaries to patients and care givers due
20 to the legislative order implemented by the
21 executive office of the Mayor to address the
22 pandemic, the Caucus believes that there should
23 also be equity in regard to the delivery of
24 cannabis here in the District.

25 The Caucus believes that this Board,

1 in a directive to recommend to the EOM, that
2 creates a separate delivery, cultivation and
3 dispensary licenses. In turn, these licenses
4 should be deliberately and intentionally
5 distributed through a social equity program for
6 addressing equity and noninclusive zone
7 associated with the District's cannabis program
8 and to satisfy the newly minted Racial Equity
9 Achieves Results Act of 2020, or REACH Act, which
10 mandates racial equity and inclusion throughout
11 all District agencies and programs.

12 This will ensure equity to Returning
13 Citizens and those harmed by the war on drugs who
14 have ownership capabilities in the District's
15 medical cannabis program.

16 As a matter of fact, the Board should
17 immediately release the two cultivation licenses
18 that the Caucus believes are available in light
19 of 22 DCMR 6200.2, which reads, "the number of
20 cultivation centers registered to operate in the
21 District to not exceed ten." Currently there are
22 only eight cultivation centers operating in the
23 District, which seven are ultimately operated by
24 Whites.

25 At a bare minimum this would include

1 an appearance of equity inclusion and fairness in
2 the District's medical cannabis program till the
3 full social equity program is created. The
4 Caucus believes current laws concerning Returning
5 Citizen participation is not prohibited.

6 The current law is clear. D.C.
7 Official Code 7-1671.06(j) reads an important
8 part.

9 "No director, officer, members,
10 incorporator, agent, or employee of a dispensary,
11 cultivation center, or testing laboratory who has
12 access to the medical marijuana at the
13 dispensary, cultivation center, or testing
14 laboratory shall have a felony conviction,
15 provided that the ABC Board shall not disqualify
16 any of the forgoing individuals solely for a
17 felony conviction of possession with intent to
18 distribute marijuana that occurred before the
19 July 17, 2014."

20 The Caucus interprets this mandate for
21 the Returning Citizens with marijuana convictions
22 prior to that date, can and should be owners and
23 operators of medical marijuana that is here in
24 the District, including delivery services.

25 In conclusion, and express the bill,

1 and as expressed in the bill, the Caucus believes
2 that the Board is at a position to move the
3 needle and commenced the path to equity inclusion
4 and centers for Returning Citizens, are merely
5 leasing the two remaining cultivation licenses
6 for centers for Returning Citizen ownership.

7 Personally, I have a marijuana
8 conviction prior to July 17th, 2014 and I have
9 been in consultation with the indigenous persons
10 of color, another unrealized and underrepresented
11 group, with over 20 years of cultivation
12 experience. I am also in the process of
13 assembling a team.

14 The Caucus stands ready to partner
15 with the Board to bring about the much needed
16 change of its medical marijuana program. The
17 Caucus cannot sit back and allow the District to
18 use the irrelevance of an appropriations rider
19 than itself, does not mention prohibition
20 ownership by Returning Citizens who act as an
21 officer to ownership and equity by Returning
22 Citizens in the District's medical marijuana
23 program from an ownership stance. Thank you very
24 much.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.

1 Spencer. And you had about 40 seconds, so thank
2 you for abiding with the timeline.

3 And so, you can remain online, if you
4 so desire. The Board might have some questions
5 that we want to ask the participants once
6 everyone has testified. All right, thank you,
7 Mr. Spencer.

8 All right, the next person who is
9 scheduled to testify is Milford T. Washington,
10 who is a resident. And Andrews, can you please
11 elevate the rights of Milford T. Washington
12 please?

13 And, Mr. Spencer, can you please mute
14 your phone please? Thank you, sir.

15 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Washington, your
16 rights have been elevated.

17 MR. WASHINGTON: Hello? Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Washington,
19 do you have a camera? Do you have a camera you
20 can --

21 MR. WASHINGTON: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, I can see
23 you. All right. Good morning, Mr. Washington.
24 Thank you for appearing this morning.

25 And as I stated, you have five minutes

1 to testify. And please go ahead, sir.

2 MR. WASHINGTON: Okay. My question
3 for this roundtable is, does ABRA really know who
4 the marijuana delivery drivers are?

5 But before I move the answer to my own
6 question, I contest the rule that delivery
7 drivers must be employees of the dispensary. And
8 I'll tell you why.

9 The District needs to create a social
10 equity program and issue non-storefront retail
11 delivery licensees for would-be cannabis
12 entrepreneurs who are Returning Citizens. For a
13 city agency to exclude is disenfranchised
14 population from getting their feet in the door
15 while limiting and witnessing the suffering of
16 enormous economic setback, one has no choice but
17 to contest.

18 Since public safety is of paramount
19 concern, please know that underground sales of
20 cannabis in the District booms better than
21 Bitcoin. If you doubt the special trust and
22 confidence bestowed in me, just log onto
23 wherestheweeds.com D.C. and see for yourself.

24 These are your delivery drivers.
25 Number counted of delivery vendors, there are

1 over 70 vendors, premium vendors, that's paying
2 \$3,000 a month just to advertise.

3 For catch phrase names like, Cloud 9
4 DC to High Life. You have to wonder who these
5 people are, where the marijuana comes from, whose
6 growing so many strains in such large volumes and
7 where the weed is being stored.

8 So the question is, who really stands
9 to double benefit from ABRA's position to allow
10 more delivery drivers?

11 So no, the existing dispensaries
12 already have enough delivery personnel, they
13 already have enough delivery vehicles. No ABRA
14 rule should exclusively restrict marijuana
15 delivery to those employees of new or existing
16 marijuana dispensaries.

17 Adopting new rules against these
18 drivers would be to allow to disenfranchise the
19 contract of the existing dispensaries. ABRA can
20 begin there.

21 When it comes to owning a preservation
22 center, disenfranchised residents will have been
23 disproportionately arrested as a result of
24 marijuana prohibition has, they have a barrier.
25 In the 2019 paralegal graduation ceremony, Mayor

1 Bowser stated, we know that we must continually
2 find new ways to overcome the barriers our
3 residents face in creating new pathways to the
4 middle class.

5 Mayor Bowser moved in and she knows
6 now, that in order to remove these social
7 barriers, new pathways are needed, social equity
8 is their path, that barrier removal. To make
9 this barrier removal, all that's needed are the
10 zones to operate a fair amount of non-delivery
11 retail licensees issued to Returning Citizens who
12 qualify.

13 Should ABRA consider creating
14 implementing these rules for a delivery license
15 must mandate that such licenses be issued
16 provisionally. And because the storage of
17 cannabis requires real property from warehousing,
18 and this means that time alone with honest
19 stakeholders would be needed to procure property,
20 receive a award of property, purchase property or
21 sign leases.

22 Licensees can contract with existing
23 cultivation centers to purchase the inventory.
24 However, this model would be on a limited basis
25 as there could arise pricing issues with pricing

1 disparities of wholesale cannabis.

2 And by this scenario I mean, that
3 existing cultivation can rise crisis so far out
4 of reach that the delivery license would be the
5 fourth item, you know, close his or her doors or
6 invite scrupulous investors with nothing but
7 gaining a majority stake in mind.

8 So, the disenfranchised recipients of
9 any social equity program must be capable of
10 breaking free from dependence of those who are
11 seeking to flip them backwards. This has
12 happened to most equity recipients in other
13 states, and the District must not become the
14 laughing stalk and repeat it.

15 Imagine yourselves coming home from 15
16 years of special assignment where you worked a
17 job harvesting a commodity. You had a hard
18 supervisor and the work conditions were so severe
19 where your wages weren't enough to survive in one
20 week when you returned.

21 And now imagine returning to your home
22 only to find that the hard supervisor had a
23 cousin who owns all of the business and entities
24 in your home and he sells that very commodity.

25 But then there is a host of other

1 scrupulous players who are delivery drivers in
2 your city and they possess that same commodity,
3 but it is less expensive and it is not safe in
4 any ways or means. These are your delivery
5 drivers. The underground portion of this.

6 But ABRA may not be able to stop the
7 underground, but for there to be a level field of
8 equity pay and play, ABRA must become socially
9 and equity conscious by issuing moratorium on
10 this particular rulemaking. Specifically so that
11 ABRA can create new rules regarding the creation
12 of non-storefront retail delivery license
13 submitted through an exclusive open application
14 period to Returning Citizens that were affected
15 by prohibition.

16 Otherwise, it's back to business as
17 usual. Witnessing the alienation of the
18 ostracized while the rich get richer.

19 So, the first slap in the face is
20 prohibition, the second slap is social inequity
21 in the marijuana legalization, which is so severe
22 it need ice supplied to it. You, ABRA, you are
23 the ice packs.

24 And for a limited time, ABRA can issue
25 policy mandated delivery license to be awarded to

1 Returning Citizens who may have been for home for
2 48 months or more.

3 And from a standpoint of a legal
4 argument, there is no equal protection issued
5 here because disenfranchised persons are not
6 similarly situated to a cannabis entity earning
7 billions of dollars. So ABRA can lead the way.

8 It's time to play far. It's time to
9 get back what has never been given. Let's do
10 what's right, let's fix this. Let ABRA make do
11 some, reparation, if you will.

12 And I am Milford Washington, I
13 sincerely thank you for your reparation.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
15 Thank you, Mr. Washington.

16 MR. WASHINGTON: Yes, sir.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
18 much. All right. Can you please put your
19 microphone on mute please?

20 MR. WASHINGTON: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. The
22 next witness to testify is Ms. Yvette Alexander.
23 So, Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate the
24 rights of Ms. Alexander please. Former
25 Councilmember, Yvette Alexander.

1 MS. ANDREWS: Sure. Standby. Thank
2 you. Ms. Alexander, your mic has been unmuted.
3 Mr. Chair, this is a call in.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
5 Good morning. Good morning, Ms. Alexander.

6 Thank you for, I wish, I prefer when
7 I do public hearings that I see the participants,
8 but I thank you for agreeing to testify this
9 morning. And you have five minutes, ma'am.
10 Please go ahead.

11 MS. ALEXANDER: Thank you. I thought,
12 can you hear me?

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, we can
14 hear you.

15 MS. ALEXANDER: I'm sorry, I thought
16 I was on video. I can see you.

17 (Laughter.)

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Oh. I was told
19 that you were a call in, so that's why --

20 MS. ALEXANDER: I did call in, but
21 then I got in on the computer as well.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, if you
23 can tell Ms. Andrews where you are on the
24 computer, so you can elevate your rights on the
25 computer. I know that she has elevated your

1 rights on the call in. But I can't --

2 MS. ANDREWS: Good morning. I do see,
3 sorry, what is her name?

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Alexander.

5 MS. ALEXANDER: Alexander.

6 MS. ANDREWS: Ms. Alexander, I do see
7 you, but the only option I have is to unmute your
8 line, we don't have a video for you.

9 MS. ALEXANDER: I'm sorry. I'm on my
10 iPad, I'm not on my computer.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

12 MS. ANDREWS: It's okay, we can hear
13 you just fine.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So go ahead,
15 ma'am.

16 MS. ALEXANDER: Well, okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

18 MS. ALEXANDER: Well good morning.
19 Greetings, Chairman Anderson, and the ABC Board.
20 I also see another Ward 7, James Short, on the
21 call, so greetings to Ward members.

22 I'm Yvette Alexander. I'm with Y.
23 Alexander and Associates representing the
24 position of the District of Columbia Cannabis
25 Trade Association. Linda Mercado-Greene is the

1 board chairperson.

2 The DCCTA was formed to advocate for
3 improved access for patients in our cities
4 medical cannabis program since its inception in
5 2013. The members represent licensed medical
6 cannabis cultivation centers and dispensaries in
7 Washington, D.C.

8 Currently, the medical program has
9 9,618 patients. And it is growing at an
10 accelerated pace.

11 Under ABRA's supervision, since
12 October --

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Alexander,
14 I am no longer hearing you. Ms. Alexander?

15 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Chair, I do still
16 see her on the line, and her line is unmute, but
17 I don't hear her.

18 MS. ALEXANDER: -- for an increase by
19 3,000.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Alexander?
21 Ms. Alexander, we missed about a minute or two of
22 your testimony, so I'm not sure where, we
23 couldn't hear you, so maybe you want to start
24 back over. I think after your introduction then
25 we didn't hear anything.

1 Ms. Alexander?

2 MS. ANDREWS: Ms. Alexander, your line
3 has been unmuted. You can go ahead and announce
4 yourself.

5 MS. ALEXANDER: I was told no one
6 could hear?

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Right. So we
8 cannot hear you, so I will ask that you start
9 back over. I don't know what happened, so why
10 don't you start back over, after your
11 introduction, ma'am. Please.

12 MS. ALEXANDER: Okay. Can you hear me
13 now?

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.

15 MS. ALEXANDER: Thank you. As I
16 stated, I'm representing the position of the
17 District of Columbia Cannabis Trade Association.

18 The cannabis program has, since the
19 inception of the medical cannabis program in
20 2013, the current number of patients in the
21 program is 9,618. And it's growing at an
22 accelerated pace.

23 Since ABRA's oversight of the program,
24 October 1st of 2020, it's increased by 3,000. So
25 we're really pleased with that.

1 The Association would like to express
2 their unanimous support for continued delivery
3 service availability to accommodate their
4 patients. This will allow for more option and
5 greater accessibility.

6 Especially for those who either lack
7 transportation, prefer privacy or have medical
8 conditions that confine them to their homes or
9 limit their mobility.

10 Also, it has proven to be a safer
11 option during the COVID-19 pandemic because of
12 less in-person contact at the dispensaries.
13 Since the inception of delivery service, the
14 dispensaries have been successful in providing
15 reliable and safe services to their patients.

16 In addition, they have increased their
17 ability to provide additional employment
18 opportunity to District of Columbia residents,
19 who can provide the delivery service.

20 The Association requests to
21 permanently keep delivery service as a part of
22 their daily operation. And would like to offer
23 the following recommendations on best practices.

24 In addition to the authorized
25 dispensary staff training on drivers, drivers on

1 the move and regulations, on D.C. rules and
2 regulations, a third-party delivery service
3 should be included as an option. Either way,
4 there must be consistent delivery protocols and
5 compliance in place for all drivers.

6 And these are recommendations.
7 Drivers must have the necessary technology for
8 receipt of each order.

9 Drivers must have patient
10 verification. They must process the sale and
11 delivery completion.

12 The driver should only transport the
13 amount onboard for onboard inventory allowed.
14 The drivers must keep a destination log.

15 The drivers must have a secure lockbox
16 for products. All vehicles must be equipped with
17 GPS tracking.

18 Drivers must have their license and
19 approved credentials on hand, at all times,
20 during deliveries. Drivers should return to the
21 dispensaries if there are no deliveries within 30
22 minutes of each other.

23 And all drivers must have a valid U.S.
24 driver's license, registration and proof of their
25 insurance. And a complete background check.

1 The District of Columbia Cannabis
2 Trade Association requests that before any
3 regulations are finalized, they are able to offer
4 additional input and approval, or if possible,
5 they would like to serve in an advisory capacity
6 in developing a permanent delivery structure.

7 In closing, the Association looks
8 forward to the renaming of ABRA, to the Alcohol
9 Beverage Cannabis Regulatory Administration, to
10 reflect this new role in cannabis regulation.
11 And also requests to have at least one nonvoting
12 member in the legal cannabis industry to serve on
13 the Board.

14 And thank you so much for your time
15 and patience. And I'm available to answer any
16 questions that you might have.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
18 much, Ms. Alexander, for your testimony today.
19 All right.

20 All right, our next witness is Jason
21 Aldrich, co-owner of Reset Wellness. Ms.
22 Andrews, can you please elevate the rights of Mr.
23 Aldrich?

24 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Aldrich, your rights
25 have been elevated.

1 MR. ALDRICH: Okay.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Aldrich?

3 MR. ALDRICH: Yes. Good morning,
4 everyone.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. If
6 you have a camera then I guess you can turn your
7 camera on. And then, thank you. You have five
8 minutes, sir.

9 MR. ALDRICH: Here we go.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, thank
11 you.

12 MR. ALDRICH: Good morning. I would
13 like to thank the Board for their time today.

14 I'm always pleased when the citizens
15 of Washington, D.C. are able to take part in the
16 decisions that shape their own communities. I've
17 always appreciated processes that support
18 inclusion and consideration towards the people
19 who it would affect the most.

20 Today I'll make a humble attempt to
21 share some perspectives to be considered while
22 rulemaking and legislation are being created.
23 The first point I would like to offer is
24 inclusion.

25 I think we have an opportunity here to

1 put the locals first. Often times when decisions
2 are made concerning legislation, the community
3 doesn't get the word in time to participate
4 properly in the process.

5 I think we have an opportunity here to
6 ensure that only is the community involved in the
7 decision making process, they put measures in
8 place to see to it that many Washingtonians have
9 ample opportunity to participate in the economic
10 development and growth opportunities.

11 Secondly, I would offer there is a
12 chance to address systematic injustices. Many of
13 our citizens grew up in the area in which
14 marijuana was classified as a Schedule I drug.
15 Putting it in the same category as crack cocaine
16 and heroin, and other drugs.

17 As a result, ended up facing harsh
18 penalties and extensive jail sentences for minor
19 offenses, which brings up my next point.

20 If we have an opportunity to create
21 pathways for Returning Citizens. If we want to
22 continue to ensure that all our Returning
23 Citizens have an opportunity to participate in
24 all industries. Especially ones that have had a
25 negative impact on them and their families.

1 In order to do that, we must remove
2 the barriers that are normally put in place to
3 discourage entry into the industry or make it
4 difficult to participate.

5 Though the District was Forward
6 Thinking, and acted swiftly during the pandemic
7 to make sure that patients can still get their
8 medicine. It did not address long-term
9 opportunities for our citizens to participate in
10 the delivery process.

11 Being agents of the dispensaries is an
12 example of one of those barriers. If we create
13 outside opportunities for delivery services to
14 participate in economic opportunities in the
15 medical marijuana program in D.C., we can ensure
16 that there isn't a stronghold on the industry by
17 companies with vast economic resources to control
18 the industry.

19 There are many courier transportation,
20 private limousine companies that have the
21 infrastructure in place already to meet the needs
22 of the dispensaries to ensure safe transport
23 while diversifying the marketplace and economic
24 opportunities in the process.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Are you done,

1 sir?

2 MR. ALDRICH: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

4 Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Aldrich.

5 MR. ALDRICH: Thanks. Anytime.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, thank you.

7 Please mute your microphone. Please.

8 All right. The next witness to
9 testify is Rabbi Jeffrey Kahn, founder Takoma
10 Wellness Center. Ms. Andrews, can you please
11 elevate the rights of Rabbi Kahn please.

12 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Chair, I don't see
13 Jeffrey Kahn, oh, yes I do. I'm sorry.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

15 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Kahn, your rights
16 have been elevated. There are two Mr. Kahn's on
17 the line.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I think it's a
19 family call.

20 MS. ANDREWS: I just want to make
21 sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Rabbi Jeffrey
23 Kahn is the person speaking. I guess his other
24 family members might join on.

25 MS. ANDREWS: Sure.

1 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So, Rabbi Kahn,
2 is there someone that we need to elevate, whose
3 rights we need to elevate or is it just yours?
4 Rabbi Kahn?

5 RABBI KAHN: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. All
7 right. Now I'm saying, all right.

8 RABBI KAHN: I can see you.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, I can't
10 see you, so if you have a camera, you can turn it
11 on. But I, at least I can't see you here.

12 But, anyway, sir -- All right, yes,
13 now I can see you.

14 RABBI KAHN: Okay.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you for
16 appearing this morning. And we have five
17 minutes, so go ahead.

18 RABBI KAHN: Thanks so much. Good
19 morning. And happy healthy New Year to you all.

20 I just wanted to take this opportunity
21 really to let you know who we are. And as you
22 can see, there are several families online.
23 We're the Kahn family.

24 Rabbi Jeffrey Kahn, my wife Stephanie
25 and my son Josh. We own and operate Takoma

1 Wellness Center, which we established. We first
2 supplied in 2011 and opened in 2013.

3 We're the first and oldest continued,
4 dispensary continuously serving medical marijuana
5 patients here in the District of Columbia. And
6 we're thrilled to still be here in 2021, working
7 closely with ABRA.

8 We'd like to make sure that the ABRA
9 Board knows that we agreed to the comments made
10 by Ms. Alexander. And that we endorse them
11 wholly. That we are --

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Rabbi Kahn,
13 hold on one minute please.

14 RABBI KAHN: Sure.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm not sure
16 whose phone line is also open, can, if you're not
17 speaking, can you please mute your microphone
18 please? Okay. Go ahead, sir.

19 RABBI KAHN: Sure. No problem. Just
20 that we're in fully agreement with the comments
21 made by representative Ms. Alexander.

22 That we're thrilled, that after ten
23 years that we're able to serve our patients with
24 delivery and in a way that ABRA has made this
25 possible under the most difficult of conditions,

1 to make something that's so important to our
2 patients available. We certainly endorse,
3 continuing as we're building and making the laws
4 permanent.

5 We would like to make one suggestion
6 however, and that's that the, at the moment, I'm
7 just trying to look at my other screen. And
8 can't.

9 We're required to deliver to the
10 patient's original registered address. Verify
11 that the patients, where the patient and care
12 giver was actively enrolled in the District of
13 Columbia medical marijuana program and that the
14 delivery address matches the patients or care
15 giver's home address.

16 It's difficult for us to ascertain
17 that. Their address may have changed since they
18 first registered and got their cards. They may
19 have informed the regulatory agency of that, but
20 no one is required to inform us of that.

21 So we'd like to move to consider
22 making it that we can deliver to any registered
23 D.C. patient at any legal spot in the District of
24 Columbia. To any of their residences, because
25 the residences may have changed and it's very

1 difficult, if not downright impossible, to
2 ascertain exactly where they're living.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, sir,
4 is that your extent of your testimony?

5 RABBI KAHN: That's the end of my
6 testimony. But again, just to go on record, how
7 thrilled we are at Takoma Wellness that ABRA has
8 taken over the regulatory process. We're looking
9 forward, very much, to working with you now and
10 in the future.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
12 much for your testimony here today, sir. All
13 right. So can you please mute your microphone
14 please.

15 The next witness is Ms. Linda Greene.
16 Owner, Anacostia Organics. Ms. Andrews, can you
17 please elevate the rights of Ms. Greene.

18 MS. ANDREWS: Ms. Greene, your rights
19 have been elevated.

20 MS. GREENE: Can you hear me?

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Ms.
22 Greene.

23 MS. GREENE: Okay. Can you see me?

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, we can't
25 see you.

1 MS. GREENE: My camera is on.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I cannot see
3 you. But I believe that I, I cannot see you
4 currently.

5 MS. GREENE: Okay. My camera is on,
6 so I don't know what the issue is, but I'll go on
7 with my testimony.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

9 (Simultaneous speaking.)

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You have five
11 minutes, ma'am.

12 MS. GREENE: I'm sorry?

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You have five
14 minutes. Go ahead.

15 MS. GREENE: Yes. Thank you. Dear
16 Chairman Anderson and Board Members of the
17 Alcohol Beverage Control, Happy New Year. We're
18 all happy to see 2021 come.

19 Thank you for holding this important
20 public hearing today in regards to the future of
21 medical cannabis delivery in the District of
22 Columbia for proposed rulemaking.

23 I am Linda Mercado Greene, owner and
24 CEO of Anacostia Organics. The first medical
25 marijuana dispensary east of the river, located

1 in Ward 8 in Historic Anacostia.

2 We are getting ready to celebrate our
3 two year anniversary, being open in January 24th.
4 And we are delighted.

5 Additionally, I am the chair of the
6 D.C. Cannabis Trade Association. The host of
7 Cannabis Conversations podcast on D.C. Radio,
8 which is the first and only D.C. Government
9 cannabis media program.

10 And the chair of the Diversity, Equity
11 and Inclusion Taskforce for the Cannabis Trade
12 Federation. I was also honored to be appointed
13 to the Reopen D.C. Committee by Mayor Bowser,
14 serving on the medical committee representing the
15 cannabis industry.

16 Today I'm representing my business,
17 Anacostia Organics. I agree with all of the
18 comments made by former Councilmember Yvette
19 Alexander on behalf of the D.C. Cannabis Trade
20 Association, also for the record.

21 By Mayor Bowser declaring medical
22 marijuana dispensaries as an essential business
23 during this dreadful public health emergency,
24 doors opened for us, which we had been requesting
25 from the Department of Health for a long time, to

1 better serve our patients. One, pre-ordering for
2 an in-store pick up, two, curbside pickup, and
3 three, home delivery.

4 We are categorized as a pharmacy, but
5 we're denied the same privileges as other
6 mainstream pharmacies, for whatever reason. Now,
7 under ABRA, we are able to better serve our
8 patients, to be able to obtain their medications,
9 just as they were going to any pharmacy of their
10 choice.

11 Home delivery has been extremely
12 successful for my business, Anacostia Organics.
13 It was a slow start for us, but now it's an
14 important part of our business.

15 The majority of my patients are
16 veterans, seniors, and those who have extreme
17 mobility issues. Not to mention the lack of
18 transportation, even with their own community,
19 here east of the river.

20 Home delivery has been a blessing.
21 And they are so grateful.

22 For now these patients are able to get
23 their medical cannabis medications delivered
24 right to their homes, negating the contact
25 exposure to a person who has the COVID virus

1 knowingly or unknowingly.

2 Therefore, we are hoping home delivery
3 for medical care and its patients to become a
4 permanent law in the District of Columbia. I,
5 for one, volunteer to have ABRA, in any aspect,
6 to make this possible.

7 My staff and I recommend the following
8 improvements. One, patients should be able to
9 have their caretakers pick up products from the
10 delivery vehicle. While our delivery drivers
11 have informed us, it breaks their hearts to see
12 patients struggle to make it to the delivery
13 vehicle in all types of weather, because they are
14 impaired and have health issues that create
15 mobility issues.

16 Two, there should be no limit of the
17 number of vehicles or drivers, due to the
18 increase of delivery in on demand services.

19 Three, all delivery drivers should be
20 vetted and have background checks as dispensary
21 employees have to as well.

22 Four, dispensaries should have the
23 right to outsource delivery to a third-party
24 delivery service.

25 And five, medical cannabis patients

1 with valid state medical cannabis cards, either
2 paper cards or on their cell phones, which we're
3 hoping we graduate to in D.C., should be allowed
4 to have their medical cannabis delivered to
5 wherever they are staying in D.C. Hotels,
6 wherever, because people are very mobile now.

7 And that is all we have at this time.
8 Once again, thank you very much to listening to
9 our industry today and holding this public
10 hearing. And I'm going to stay around for the
11 entire thing to answer any questions that you may
12 have. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
14 much, Ms. Greene.

15 All right, our next witness is Mr.
16 Norbert Pickett, president and CEO of DC Holistic
17 Wellness. Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate
18 the rights of Mr. Pickett, please?

19 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Pickett, your rights
20 have been elevated.

21 MR. PICKETT: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
23 Pickett, you have five minutes.

24 MR. PICKETT: Good morning, Chairman
25 Anderson. Good morning, Board. Thank you for

1 everybody attending today in this important
2 hearing.

3 My name is Norbert Pickett, owner of
4 DC Holistic Wellness. We are the seventh
5 dispensary to come online here in the District.

6 We also are the, I'm also the first
7 African-American to solely own his dispensary.
8 And when I say that I mean, I have no partners,
9 no loans. I use my own capital. I own the
10 building and I completely finance and run the
11 business and operate the business myself. And
12 I'm very proud of that.

13 We're also the first cannabis business
14 on the east coast to unionize with the UFCW Local
15 400. So we are a fully unionized facility that
16 offers, that gives our employees free community
17 college to them and their immediate family.

18 We give raises every six months. We
19 give health insurance, we give vision, we give
20 dental. We give a retirement plan. Sick leave,
21 funeral leave, campaign leave.

22 We have really worked out a great
23 program for our employees because I look at this
24 industry as something, I want my employees to be,
25 look at this industry as a career and not a job.

1 So I'm very proud of some of the
2 things that we've done in the District since we
3 have opened. And we continue to work hard.

4 Let me start by saying that I'm a
5 patient first. Because I come to this industry
6 as a broken man.

7 I was physically disabled from being
8 hit in a car accident where I've had 22 spinal
9 surgeries. I had to learn how to walk again
10 twice. I almost died from having the screw put
11 in my aorta.

12 And so, I was basically taking five
13 different opioids at once. Cannabis helped me
14 transition off the opioids, which gave me a
15 better quality of life. So everything I do, it's
16 on behalf of the patients. I advocate on the
17 behalf of patients.

18 Once I receive my license, which I
19 actually got through a lawsuit, there is
20 corruption within the program. I actually had to
21 file a lawsuit because another owner had created
22 a strawman, the judge had found. This suit is
23 still going on.

24 And this type of behavior is what
25 keeps African-Americans out of the cannabis

1 business in the District of Columbia. I am
2 totally against any one of these owners being on
3 the board because the board needs to be
4 independent and should not be corrupted.

5 So I agree. I don't think any owner
6 running the cannabis business should be
7 participating on the ABRA Board. That's the
8 first thing.

9 Let me go on to the delivery system,
10 because that's what we're here to discuss today.
11 First, the first system, and its state to me,
12 works just fine.

13 I don't think we need any third-party
14 delivery services. What were these companies
15 doing before delivery was established, I think
16 any dispensary doing delivery with their
17 employees, who are registered through the ABRA
18 system, and our program, who have had background
19 checks, should be able to deliver product every
20 day.

21 So that's the first thing. We don't
22 need any third-party, the dispensaries can handle
23 this themselves with their own employees.

24 The second thing is, we should
25 increase the hours of delivery, I feel, from 9:00

1 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. so that any patients can have
2 more access during the day.

3 The other thing that we should do, I
4 believe, is we should increase the amount of
5 delivery a delivery person can carry because if
6 we're increasing the hours, we're going to have
7 to increase the amount of medication that the
8 delivery person can carry.

9 I think that there should be no more
10 than two or three cars registered at a dispensary
11 for delivery. In case one car breaks down you
12 have another car. Something goes sideways with
13 that car you have another car.

14 The funny thing about this whole thing
15 is, when we were introducing this law, I was the
16 only owner that supported it because I wanted to
17 give disabled patients and immune-compromised
18 patients the ability to not have to come into the
19 dispensary during COVID in order to get their
20 medication. No other owner supported me in this.

21 And so, these owners were against it
22 and now they are for it, and now the interesting
23 thing, they want to unleash a whole fleet of
24 vehicles and a third-party to do the delivery.

25 And what I requested before this

1 meeting was data. We needed to have data to
2 actually have an accurate description, an
3 accurate conversation, about what is needed for
4 delivery. But we don't have that data today, and
5 so I'm just go forward with what my thoughts are.

6 And I don't believe we should have a
7 lockbox. That's another thing for a delivery guy
8 to turn his back on and fuddle with so he can get
9 robbed. I mean, it's just something that holds
10 you up.

11 So, those were my thoughts. And I
12 look forward to continue to work with you on
13 future legislations. Thank you for your time
14 today, everybody.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
16 Pickett.

17 All right. The next person to testify
18 is Mr. Michael Bobo from National Holistic. And,
19 Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate the rights of
20 Mr. Bobo?

21 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Chair, Mr. Abebe is
22 not on the line but Mr. Michael Bobo is.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, that's
24 what I said. No, I did say Mr. Bobo.

25 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Michael Bobo, your

1 rights have been elevated.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes. Mr. Bobo?

3 MR. BOBO: Yes, there I am.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, you
5 have five minutes please.

6 MR. BOBO: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: If you have a
8 camera, if you can turn it on. If not, you have
9 five minutes. You can start, sir.

10 MR. BOBO: Okay. I'm trying to turn
11 on my camera now. Okay. I can't seem to get the
12 camera working.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
14 Well, that's fine. You can testify.

15 MR. BOBO: Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You have five
17 minutes. Go ahead.

18 MR. BOBO: First of all, my name is
19 Michael Bobo, owner of National Holistic Healing
20 Center in Dupont Circle.

21 Thank you, Chairman Anderson, for
22 holding this hearing. And thank you to the
23 Board. Happy New Year to each and every, each
24 and all of you.

25 Since delivery and curbside has been

1 enacted in D.C., license dispensary owners and
2 their licensed dispensaries have successfully
3 completed thousands of safe delivery and curbside
4 transactions. This has been extremely helpful
5 for the patients and care givers of Washington,
6 D.C. It's allowed them to obtain their medicine
7 in a safe way while reducing contact, as the
8 Mayor requested each of us to do.

9 Therefore we are, I also do agree with
10 all Yvette Alexander's from the D.C. Cannabis
11 Trade Association positions. And in addition to
12 that, I am requesting, we are requesting the
13 following.

14 That dispensaries be allowed to
15 deliver as they see fit, be it privately or
16 contracting with other companies. Dispensaries
17 be allowed to have an unlimited amount of
18 delivery vehicles.

19 And the patients be allowed,
20 potentially be allowed to increase their limit.
21 We're currently, we are, patients are allowed a
22 four ounce per 30 day limit for medicated
23 products. And what we are seeing is that, when
24 we're looking to reduce the amount of trips that
25 people are making in and out of the house, that

1 allowing an increased limit would help them to
2 stay home further while not --

3 In addition to that, patients who are
4 opting for delivery and curbside are often
5 elderly, immune-compromised and seeking safer
6 alternatives. Therefore that's why we're
7 requesting these methods. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Bobo, for your testimony this morning.

10 All right. The next witness is Corey
11 Barnette, CEO of Metropolitan Wellness Center.
12 Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate the rights of
13 Corey Barnette, please?

14 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Barnette, your
15 rights have been elevated.

16 MR. BARNETTE: Excellent, can you guys
17 hear me?

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr.
19 Barnette, we can hear you. We can't see you, but
20 we can hear you.

21 MR. BARNETTE: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, now I can
23 see you. So go ahead, sir. You can five
24 minutes, please.

25 MR. BARNETTE: Great. Thank you,

1 Chairman Anderson, for hosting this hearing. And
2 thank you.

3 I, like the other dispensary
4 operators, am thrilled that ABRA has taken over
5 the medical marijuana program. And my name is
6 Corey Barnette. I am the owner of District
7 Growers and the owner of Metropolitan Wellness
8 Center.

9 We are the first minority owned
10 cultivation operation and the first minority
11 owned dispensary in Washington, D.C. We have
12 been active in the passage of almost all of the
13 legislation that has come to the Council, to this
14 date. And we have been proposing delivery as
15 part of previous revisions of legislation.

16 Before the emergency legislation was
17 passed. And so we were happy that the emergency
18 legislation was passed because that helped to
19 fulfill the Mayor's goals in reducing the spread
20 of the COVID virus. And we are thrilled that the
21 Council is now concerning the maintenance of that
22 legislation and making it permanent.

23 I rise today to echo the comments of
24 the D.C. Cannabis Trade Association, that of the
25 Kahn family at Takoma Wellness, that of Michael

1 Bobo at National Holistic, that of Linda Greene
2 at Anacostia Organics.

3 And without repeating their requests,
4 we would offer the following comments as
5 additions, in addition to what they had to offer
6 in the sake of time.

7 We would ask that there be no
8 restrictions. Because the current legislation is
9 silent on the licensing of, or certain provisions
10 around the licensing of drivers, we would ask
11 that there be explicit language that prevented
12 any restriction on Returning Citizens and allow
13 them to actively engage in returning to, or
14 participating in the regulated side of industry
15 as employees.

16 And if there are future licenses that
17 there also not be restrictions on Returning
18 Citizens being able to gain licenses to actually
19 own and operate.

20 And also, in section 5703.3(d) in the
21 hole, there is a provision that requires the
22 vehicle maintain a GPS tracking system. We would
23 ask that the, that there be an allowance there
24 for drivers to have handheld devices that serve
25 to fulfill this GPS tracking requirement and that

1 the restriction not be on the vehicle but that
2 make sure that either the vehicle or the driver
3 have a GPS tracking device.

4 As we all know, a lot of people use
5 their handheld or their mobile phone for
6 directions and things of that nature.

7 We would also say that we support the
8 idea that there be no limitation on drivers.

9 And we also want to put emphasis on
10 comments made by Rabbi Kahn earlier in this
11 testimony, or hearing, or roundtable, wherein it
12 is absolutely the case that there are times when
13 members of the medical marijuana program may be
14 at other family members' homes and need their
15 medicine. They may be in other parts of our city
16 and need access to their medicine and they may
17 seek delivery.

18 And the provision that we are only
19 allowed to deliver to the patient's home address
20 is somewhat overly restrictive. And to the
21 degree that we can verify that it is the patient
22 that we are delivering to, we should be allowed
23 to deliver to wherever they are provided they're
24 in the District.

25 With that I'll yield. And thank you

1 for hosting this hearing. We look forward to the
2 outcome and the legislation that's being
3 proposed. And again, we welcome the opportunity
4 to work with ABRA in the future. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
6 much, Mr. Barnette, for your testimony today.
7 Thank you.

8 All right. The next person to testify
9 is Courtney Davis, director of government
10 relations, relations for Marijuana Matters. Ms.
11 Andrews, can you please elevate the rights of Ms.
12 Davis please.

13 MS. ANDREWS: Ms. Davis, your rights
14 have been elevated.

15 MS. DAVIS: Hello.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
17 Good morning, Ms. Davis. And you have, with more
18 thanks for appearing this morning, you have five
19 minutes, ma'am.

20 MS. DAVIS: Okay. Hello, Chairperson
21 Anderson and Members of the Board. Thank you for
22 the opportunity to discuss cannabis delivery and
23 social equity in Washington, D.C.

24 My name is Courtney Davis and I serve
25 as the director of government relations for

1 Marijuana Matters.

2 Marijuana Matters is a nonprofit
3 that's focused on standardizing social equity in
4 cannabis industry in the way that it's understood
5 in the public.

6 We believe that the key to creating an
7 equitable industry is by expanding the social
8 equity cannabis ecosystem, creating a new license
9 structure that includes delivery and potential
10 future access to the cannabis supply chain and
11 will provide opportunities to create a more
12 inclusive workforce.

13 Delivery done right presents
14 opportunities for a safe and responsible cannabis
15 industry. One that does no harm.

16 Fifteen states, including Washington,
17 D.C., offer some sort of delivery service under a
18 specific regulatory scheme.

19 The current structure of delivery
20 drivers as employees only of the dispensary does
21 offer employment opportunities, but it doesn't
22 create any true skill set nor does it truly
23 prioritize individuals from communities,
24 disproportionately impacted by the War on Drug
25 policies.

1 Most recently, states like Colorado
2 and Massachusetts are realizing the benefits of
3 creating cannabis delivery license structures
4 with an exclusivity period for social equity
5 applicants.

6 Officials believe that they should
7 have cut into the unregulated market are also
8 helping to create a more equitable playing field
9 for Black and Brown entrepreneurs who often
10 struggle to enter into the capital intensive
11 legal marijuana business across the nation.

12 Denver recently created a new license
13 structure, and for the first six years, where
14 available, the delivery licenses would only be
15 available to social equity applicants, existing
16 dispensaries that want to provide delivery
17 services, have the opportunity to partner with
18 third-party for the first three years, and then
19 they could provide those services in-house.

20 In addition to the courier licenses,
21 Massachusetts, which is one of the first states
22 to legalize medical and adult use cannabis, has
23 also created a second form of delivery license
24 toward the industry that essentially allows
25 companies to operate like retailers without

1 physical storefronts.

2 And buying marijuana products in bulk
3 from suppliers who are selling inventory online,
4 via home delivery. This is not necessarily
5 something that might work in D.C., we just wanted
6 to give you an idea of what some states are
7 thinking about that have been operating for a
8 while and have had an opportunity to live with
9 their laws and make new recommendations.

10 Our organization has created a social
11 equity toolkit that provides guiding principles
12 that communities and policy makers, the
13 businesses can use as they strive to create
14 regulations that will help to create equity in
15 the marketplace. And so, we're happy to be a
16 partner for our brand.

17 And also, thank you again for the
18 opportunity to speak. And we look forward to
19 continuing the conversation. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
21 much, Ms. Davis.

22 All right. The next person who is
23 scheduled to testify is Ms. Jennifer Snowden
24 McKay, founder Highroad Delivery. Ms. Andrews,
25 can you please elevate the rights of Ms. Jennifer

1 Snowden McKay please?

2 MS. ANDREWS: Ms. Snowden, your rights
3 have been elevated.

4 MS. SNOWDEN: All right. Good
5 morning, everyone.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning.
7 Thank you for appearing today. And you have five
8 minutes, ma'am. Go ahead.

9 MS. SNOWDEN: Thanks. So I am
10 Jennifer Snowden McKay. I'm the CEO and founder
11 of Highroad Delivery, a third-party cannabis
12 delivery platform operating in D.C., Maryland and
13 Virginia. Soon to be Michigan, Massachusetts and
14 Missouri in just a few months.

15 In practice, dispensaries contract
16 with us to provide arrangements with e-commerce
17 and delivery logistic services that enable them
18 to offer deliveries to their patients without
19 taking on the burden of becoming a delivery
20 company themselves.

21 Having been active in the D.C.
22 delivery space, with drivers on the road even as
23 we speak right now, I'm happy to be here to offer
24 a little bit of insight into how deliveries work.
25 Kind of what we're seeing as the best practices

1 across the board.

2 And to help do my part to make sure
3 that D.C. takes advantage of this opportunity to
4 really become the gold standard of how to safely
5 and efficiently use delivery to increase access
6 to cannabis patients throughout the city.

7 So I want to start by getting a little
8 framework of what delivery as a business model
9 looks like compared to being a retail dispensary,
10 for example. So, every type of cannabis they
11 sell, they're product experts, they build rapport
12 with their customers, advise them on their
13 purchases, you know, ring them up, get them on
14 their way. The focus is on inventory, store
15 management, customer experience, compliance.

16 While we share that same commitment to
17 compliance and customer experience, delivery is
18 truly about logistics management. Which is a
19 completely different skill set focused on how to
20 officially move products from one point to
21 another.

22 Being a good retailer doesn't
23 necessarily translate into being a great delivery
24 provider. Just as being a great chef that runs a
25 successful restaurant doesn't necessarily

1 translate to that restaurant being able to offer
2 a great delivery experience.

3 So just as they turn to Doordash, Uber
4 Eats and the like, our dispensaries can turn to
5 us to help them.

6 As we look at the industry at large,
7 we see delivery becoming as integral a part of
8 the cannabis experience as food delivery is to
9 restaurants. Or even as Amazon has become to
10 retail.

11 In fact, the direct to consumer model
12 is already emerging in many of the more mature
13 markets. Most specifically among vertically
14 integrated players. And all signs point to that
15 trend continuing.

16 For this reason, what we have done at
17 Highroad has gone beyond just offering driver
18 services, but we've taken the steps to create a
19 platform that empowers all interested
20 dispensaries, vertical or not, to take part in a
21 more standardized delivery method that, from a
22 customer's perspective, is consistent with the
23 delivery options that they have come to enjoy and
24 expect across other industries.

25 So now I'm going to share a little

1 more about how the process works. Delivery as a
2 service thrives on volume.

3 So, in order for delivery businesses
4 to be effective, we have to create a cost
5 structure that depends on shared driver and
6 technology resources so that no one patient or
7 dispensary absorbs so much of the cost that the
8 service becomes prohibitive.

9 With that understanding, I would very
10 much love to see delivery become a permanent
11 fixture in the District. More specifically, I'm
12 in support of D.C. offering direct delivery
13 licenses to those ancillary service providers.
14 Especially if those licenses are offered through
15 a social equity program.

16 My request, however, would be that
17 these licenses be limited in number such that
18 delivery providers are given the opportunity to
19 achieve the volume necessary to be successful. I
20 believe that, in considering what that license
21 looks like, some of the following criteria would
22 be important in measuring whether a company could
23 stand up to that.

24 Some of those things would be having
25 a clear system in place to hire, train and place

1 qualified drivers, having the technology and
2 tools in place to efficiently track orders,
3 drivers and deliveries from order creation
4 through delivery completion. Having an effective
5 process in place to manage products and money
6 while on the road, which could include offering
7 cashless e-commerce solutions.

8 Having clear standard operating
9 procedures in place that the D.C. blesses, that
10 ensure compliance at all levels. Including all
11 necessary emergency protocols.

12 And having a plan in place to ensure
13 that the new jobs being created are given to
14 those community members who have otherwise been
15 restricted from participation in the field,
16 including Returning Citizens. And especially, if
17 these opportunities extend beyond just entry
18 level positions.

19 So those are my comments for today.
20 I really, I appreciate your consideration. And I
21 would love the opportunity continuing to work
22 with ABRA, our wonderful dispensaries and
23 community at-large in fully developing a
24 permanent delivery model for the District.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Ms.

1 Snowden McKay. Thank you very much for your
2 testimony.

3 All right. Our next person who is
4 scheduled to testify today is Mr. Bryan Jackson,
5 who is the general manager of DC Holistic
6 Wellness. Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate
7 the rights of Mr. Bryan Jackson please?

8 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Jackson, your rights
9 have been elevated.

10 MR. JACKSON: All right. I don't know
11 if my camera is, can you guys hear me? Good
12 morning.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr.
14 Jackson, we can hear you. And we have, I can't
15 see you but I can hear you. But you have five
16 minutes. Go ahead, sir.

17 MR. JACKSON: Okay. Good morning,
18 everybody. I want to thank the Board for hosting
19 this meeting this morning, and thank you for your
20 time.

21 I'm not going to be very long. But
22 again, my name is Bryan Jackson, I'm the general
23 manager here at DC Holistic Wellness.

24 I've worked in cultivation and retail
25 in the District of Columbia as a badged employee

1 since 2018. I'm a lifelong D.C. resident. I'm a
2 Ward 7 resident. And I've lived in Ward 7 since
3 2015. Always I have lived in D.C. And I'm also
4 a drug war veteran.

5 I would like to start off just with a
6 prefaced statement. I've heard a lot of
7 interesting comments today. And I've seen a lot
8 of interesting perspectives.

9 But I just want to start off with this
10 statement. Social equity is not a word but a
11 well perceived action. And I would like the
12 Board to please consider that ancillary ownership
13 is not a true stake in this industry.

14 So I will now get into my statements
15 today regarding delivery. I want to start by
16 saying that DC Holistic Wellness has had a senior
17 transition operational lead with the guidance
18 passed down when delivery was implemented. We've
19 had 100 percent accurate reporting to both DOH
20 and ABRA weekly.

21 Most importantly, our delivery program
22 has allowed us to get medicine to patients that
23 need it the most during the pandemic. The
24 delivery program has allowed us to create three
25 permanent positions for badged employees who are

1 all District residents.

2 I agree, I want to say also that I do
3 agree with Rabbi Kahn and a few of the other
4 owners that stated that deliveries should be
5 permitted to any D.C. medical card holder. One
6 issue that I see that is very prevalent right now
7 is that you have people, you know, D.C. is a
8 transient city. People live in apartments,
9 leases and things of that nature.

10 People move and the DMV is closed.
11 And so, people just don't have ways to get
12 updated IDs. So we've had to turn down a number
13 of people because their IDs either don't match
14 their address that we have on file here in our
15 system or that they have not been able to obtain
16 a suitable ID.

17 So I would like for the Board to
18 please consider allowing delivery to any D.C.
19 medical patient with a medical card.

20 I want to go on to say that, I want to
21 just start off again by requesting that I think
22 one of the most important topics of this meeting
23 that no one has addressed has been, ABRA and MPD
24 seriously work to shutdown illegal delivery
25 services.

1 It's very difficult for District
2 residents to differentiate between legal and
3 illegal services. I have a prime example.

4 At 1334 North Capitol Street,
5 Northwest, there is an establishment called All
6 American Bakery. They have a cannabis leaf
7 actually displayed on their door. And they have
8 a website and a delivery service.

9 If I was new to D.C. and I had no
10 knowledge of where to obtain medicine, I would
11 arrive by this door with the cannabis leaf on it
12 and I would go to their website and I would
13 probably utilize their business. This
14 circumvents income for license holders. And it
15 is just one of many illegal businesses that we
16 must compete with.

17 So this is both a safety and a public
18 health issue. And it's also a contradiction to
19 the war on drugs that existed for a number of
20 years that victimized myself and my family.

21 That the government, ABRA, and the
22 police are looking the other way on many of these
23 businesses that are operating with impunity, but
24 numbers of families lost family members, and were
25 victimized by the war on drugs. So I would

1 implore you guys to make that a priority.

2 Lastly, I just want to state that I am
3 firmly against third-party delivery services.
4 And some of my concerns with third-party delivery
5 services, most importantly, is that it's going to
6 circumvent jobs from District residents.

7 We have, you know, an employee mandate
8 that we have to employ a certain amount of
9 District residents. Any other third-party
10 service, now you have a contract, and this
11 contract is not obligated to follow the same laws
12 and rules as the dispensary owner.

13 It will also prohibit license holders,
14 like I said, from creating permanent badged jobs
15 for employees so that more people who have been
16 victimized by the war on drugs can be included in
17 the market.

18 Lastly, I think only facility
19 employees should be able to conduct the
20 deliveries because they've had access to both
21 patient records and metrics.

22 So, just food for thought, who is
23 stopping delivery contractors, someone that's a
24 contractor for a delivery service, from
25 collecting information while working for a

1 dispensary and going off on his own and starting
2 a grey market service.

3 So I think it's very important for the
4 Board to consider those points. And I appreciate
5 your guys' time today and I yield the rest of it.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
7 Jackson for your testimony today.

8 And the next witness that we have
9 that's scheduled to testify is Mr. Charles
10 Thorton. Ms. Andrews, can you please elevate the
11 rights of Mr. Thorton?

12 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Chair, Mr. Thorton
13 is not on the line.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Thorton,
15 are you able to identify yourself? Raise your
16 hand. Are you able to identify yourself?

17 It was mentioned this morning that you
18 were scheduled to testify. So if you are on the
19 line, can you identify yourself and we'll elevate
20 your rights, sir?

21 While we're waiting to see if Mr.
22 Thorton has identified himself, is there any
23 other member of the public who wishes to testify
24 today?

25 Can you please use, raise your hand

1 through the chat service or send a message with
2 your name and contact information. With your
3 name, and we'll have Ms. Andrews elevate your
4 rights, please.

5 So if there is any other member of the
6 public who did not sign up to testify today who
7 would like to testify, please raise your hand or
8 please identify yourself, in some ways, and we'll
9 have you testify.

10 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Jason Martin, I see
11 your hand raised. Are you wishing to testify?

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, Mr. Martin,
13 you have a case. You put something in the chat
14 and I responded to it. Your case is at 1:30 this
15 afternoon.

16 So are you here to testify regarding
17 the medical cannabis delivery or are you here
18 regarding your case that's scheduled for 1:30
19 this afternoon, sir?

20 MR. MARTIN: Just for the case.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So
22 your case is scheduled for 1:30 this afternoon.
23 So it's on our calendar for 1:30. So you can log
24 on back at 1:30 this afternoon.

25 MR. MARTIN: Okay, thank you.

1 MS. ANDREWS: Mr. Martin, can you
2 please lower your hand for me? Thank you.

3 MR. MARTIN: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Is there anyone
5 else on the line who wishes to testify? Please
6 raise your hand and Ms. Andrews will elevate your
7 rights.

8 MS. ANDREWS: I think that's all, Mr.
9 Chair.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
11 Yes, I want to thank everyone this morning for
12 testifying.

13 And one of the things that we're going
14 to do, I have some questions and so what I would
15 like, just some questions, and then other Board
16 Members are welcome to answer questions. And if
17 you want to respond, can you please raise your
18 hand and we'll have you testify.

19 One of the questions I'm just curious
20 about is that, if a social equity, and I know
21 there were testimony on social equity, so if a
22 social equity program is incorporated into the
23 medical cannabis program, generally, or for
24 delivery services specifically, what should the
25 goals be, what should it do, who should qualify,

1 who should the benefits be, reserve licenses,
2 technical assistance, loans, financing?

3 If anyone want to address that issue
4 can you please raise your hand and we will, you
5 can testify on that issue please. Anyone?

6 MR. SPENCER: I think I missed part of
7 the question. This is Eric Spencer.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes. I'm
9 sorry.

10 The question is that, if a social
11 equity program is incorporated into the medical
12 cannabis program, generally, or for delivery
13 service specifically, what should the goals be,
14 what should it do, who should quality for it, who
15 should the benefits be, reserve licensees,
16 technical assistance loans, just if you have any
17 views on if we were to do a social equity
18 program? Any views on that please.

19 MR. SPENCER: Yes. I would --

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, who
21 is speaking?

22 MR. SPENCER: This is Eric Spencer.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
24 Spencer.

25 MR. SPENCER: Everything that you

1 mentioned would be a decent start. I mean,
2 social equity is irrelevant. And most states, if
3 not all states, have failed.

4 Because number one, the number one
5 issue, and that would go with any business, Mr.
6 Chairman, is funding. You know, if there is no
7 funding available, then the program won't be as
8 robust and have the intended effect. Number one.

9 Number two, throughout the country
10 some of the cannabis companies that are already
11 operating with the technical assistance through
12 incubators. That's another key component where
13 they get incentives.

14 Because, you know, men and women,
15 formerly incarcerated and who have been
16 traumatized by the war on drugs, they don't have
17 the complete understanding. And I'll say that
18 for everybody who gets in this industry.

19 There are a lot of people, you know,
20 doctors, lawyers, people with some means that
21 don't have the intellectual capacity at the
22 beginning. So we're all learning as we're going.

23 But I think it's imperative here in
24 the District, which has some of the best programs
25 in the country, to create a social equity

1 program. And be intentional, you know, when it's
2 created. To make sure that Black and Brown
3 people get into the game.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
5 thank you, Mr. Spencer. Is there anyone else who
6 wants to speak on this issue?

7 MR. ALDRICH: This is Jason Aldrich
8 speaking. I would also like to add, whether it's
9 third-party or not, I think one of the most
10 important things that we want to include is
11 making sure that there are opportunities that are
12 going to District residents first program. Then
13 maybe after that, Returning Citizens who have
14 been impacted, that were offered maybe like a
15 chance at redemption.

16 So when we're talking about social
17 equity, you want to make sure that you're
18 implementing programs that are geared towards the
19 people who deserve the reparations, so to speak.

20 So I would just add that if something
21 could be implemented to see to it that the
22 employees of the program or employees that are
23 doing delivery services are District residents.
24 I would just offer that as well.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. Thank

1 you. Is there anyone else? Anyone else who
2 wants to speak on that issue?

3 MR. WASHINGTON: Yes. Yes, I do.
4 Yes, again, I'm Milford Washington and I'm a
5 graduate of Georgetown University School of
6 Continuing Studies, the paralegal program by
7 MORCA.

8 And I'm going to first put out there,
9 the question that you asked as far as the goal.
10 The goal would be, I would hope that the goal
11 would be to the disenfranchised recipients they
12 must be, I'm sorry, I'm sorry about that.

13 It should be open to individuals who
14 have been released for at least 48 months. I
15 think because within the 48 month period studies
16 have shown that people returning from
17 incarceration may be open to recidivism.

18 So, I think 48 months is a good
19 threshold, if any legislation would be drafted.
20 Or any rules would be drafted as far as who would
21 qualify.

22 But it would have to be individuals
23 who were previously incarcerated for marijuana
24 offenses. Not all Returning Citizens have prior
25 marijuana offenses.

1 I'm a Returning Citizen, I've never
2 been arrested for any drugs or anything of that
3 nature. So I would be excluded, of course.

4 Also, I want to bring about, if the,
5 because of my paralegal background I am skilled
6 in maybe drafting a proposed draft, if the Board
7 wants to know what it would look like. So I'm
8 open to assisting the Board on that.

9 And outside of my professional
10 capacity, I work for an organization that is
11 Rising for Justice. A nonprofit. We are funded
12 by the DC Bar Association.

13 So I have a background in drafting a
14 lot of legislation and things of that nature.
15 But I'm willing to come onboard and ask that
16 question of, what it may look like if the Board
17 was to make this particular rule.

18 And as far as the third-party, my
19 question is, I know that's a grey area for me
20 because I am into the social equity, focusing on
21 that. And I don't think necessarily that third-
22 parties would fill that void, if that's the right
23 word.

24 So, how these Returning Citizens
25 would, they would definitely have a property

1 issue on how to obtain property for the
2 locations, which is the zoning issue. Where are
3 they going to store cannabis and a license that
4 may be non-retail storefront, like California.
5 California issues that license as non-store
6 front.

7 So that's a warehouse issue as far as
8 how the accounting will go, there is the metric
9 system, the track and trace. That warehouse, I
10 don't know, it may be ran by the city, I don't
11 know.

12 But they can get their cannabis from
13 the existing cultivation centers until they,
14 maybe the Board can come up with a rule, they can
15 expand into owning their own cultivation centers.
16 But the goal would be to be free from the
17 existing dispensaries and the existing
18 cultivation centers in the District.

19 But to be tied into them and somehow
20 still chained to them, it just would defeat the
21 goal of social equity and injustice and being
22 able to break free from those chains. Or those
23 who would otherwise monopolate, you know,
24 monopolize the industry and keep out
25 disenfranchised people.

1 But again, I end with I'm hoping to
2 helping the Board draft some sort of legislation.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
4 Thank you, Mr. Washington.

5 Regarding the social equity issue, if
6 anyone else wants to speak, please. And you can
7 also --

8 MS. GREENE: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- hold on, let
10 me just, are you aware of any successes or
11 failures with other jurisdictions' social equity
12 programs? Okay.

13 MS. GREENE: Okay. This is Linda
14 Greene. So I would like to speak on this issue
15 since I'm doing a lot of this on a national
16 level.

17 I think that, first thing, that D.C.
18 Government needs to do is to expunge these
19 records. The records are being sealed in D.C.
20 Sealing is not expunging people for small
21 possessions of marijuana or cannabis or anything.
22 We need to expunge, just like other states are
23 doing, not seal the records.

24 So if it's expunged, it's not going to
25 be there on the federal background checks. On

1 the background checks.

2 But secondly, this is an issue
3 nationwide. The cannabis industry is being
4 forced to be more diverse to create social equity
5 programs.

6 And lots of people are rushing into it
7 so much that the programs are failing, such as in
8 Massachusetts. Such as in Oakland, such as in
9 Illinois.

10 So everybody is having to go back to
11 the table and restructure how they're failing.
12 They're issuing grants.

13 The grants aren't even enough to cover
14 their application fees. Or hiring someone to
15 write your application.

16 The finances are the biggest struggle
17 that we have as minorities in this industry.

18 So, I'm going to recommend that the,
19 that ABRA, or the city, creates a taskforce, a
20 very diverse taskforce, of people in the
21 industry, in the various parts of the industry in
22 D.C.

23 And we are the capital city of the
24 country, and I always say we're the capital city
25 of the world. Everybody is watching us and

1 everybody is going to look at our rollout of
2 recreational, our social equity program.

3 But right now I can tell you, we are
4 a small market, a legal market here. And I think
5 that's what we are discussing, the legal licenses
6 and expanding those legal licenses for other
7 opportunities for D.C. residents.

8 But I think that we need to come
9 together. Put together our ideas. Look at
10 what's worked, look at what has not worked.
11 There is absolutely nothing that is uniform in
12 this industry from state-to-state, even from
13 jurisdiction-to-jurisdiction.

14 And as far as getting products from
15 Maryland or Virginia or anywhere, we're still
16 federally illegal. So that's our first battle.

17 And that's what we are working very
18 hard on the Hill to end prohibition. And then we
19 can have interstate, intrastate, exchange of
20 products and, you know, that type of thing.

21 So, it's going to require a lot of
22 work, but we can do it. D.C. can do this. For
23 D.C. residents primarily.

24 (Laughter.)

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

1 Thank you, Ms. Greene. Is there anyone else who
2 wants to speak on social equity issue?

3 MS. GIBSON: Hello.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on, Miss.
5 All right, hold on. All right, Ms. Gibson, I was
6 told that you wanted to testify. I was going to
7 get to you in time, but go ahead. Go ahead now.

8 MS. GIBSON: Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And introduce
10 yourself for the record please.

11 MS. GIBSON: Yes, thank you. Hello
12 everyone, my name is Shara Gibson. Can you all
13 hear me?

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, ma'am.

15 MS. GIBSON: Okay. My name is Shara
16 Gibson, I'm the founder of Cannaventures. We
17 provide business developments and technical
18 assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs looking to
19 enter into the cannabis industry.

20 I'm also the owner of Planted Roots
21 Hemp Boutique. And we provide hemp CBD products
22 that are produced and crafted by small and
23 emerging businesses.

24 I just wanted to offer some remarks.
25 Just to answer your questions. And I can provide

1 my testimony in a written format in the interest
2 of time.

3 But as far as the social equity and
4 what it looks like in D.C., I think the Board
5 should really look at some of our, some of our,
6 meaning the District Government's, existing
7 programs and how it can be retooled for cannabis.

8 So for example, on the issue of
9 Returning Citizens, how can we retool the aspire
10 to entrepreneurship program to encourage
11 participation for Returning Citizens.

12 As far as the issue of delivery and
13 how do we get Returning Citizens into that, I
14 think maybe you shouldn't look at an option where
15 you either have a workforce development or a
16 licensing type where the majority of that
17 delivery company is owned by a D.C. Returning
18 Citizen.

19 I think as far as an infrastructure to
20 support small businesses, you can look within
21 your resources of DOES, DSLBD, or even DMPED, to
22 start to create an infrastructure that supports
23 local businesses.

24 I think D.C. is very unique in its
25 creation of its programs in that it's very

1 locally centered. So as far as how do we create
2 that infrastructure, I think there is a lot of
3 pieces that are already there.

4 I think there are a lot of
5 professionals who are already present in this
6 space, like myself, who can give that type of
7 guidance to aspiring entrepreneurs. Because as
8 we continue with another year without regulations
9 and laws that permit in more open markets, we're
10 facing a lot of challenges from the grey market.

11 So it's important that we at least
12 pilot some sort of program that signals to the
13 public, that signals to the nation, that D.C. is
14 ready to start to cultivate, if you will, small
15 businesses and entrepreneurs in this space.

16 Even if it means making some sort of
17 designation that dispensaries do business with
18 local D.C. entrepreneurs as far as packaging or
19 other professional services. Mandate that the
20 same way how you all mandate construction
21 industries to work with small businesses.

22 So, those are just some of the
23 comments that I wanted to quickly offer. I'll
24 definitely submit a written testimony, just in
25 the interest of time.

1 But if there is any questions, I'll be
2 happy to offer my expertise, as far as small
3 business development and training is concerned.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very
5 much, Ms. Gibson.

6 I'm going to ask another question and
7 then I'm going to have the other Board Members
8 ask questions if they want.

9 But regarding delivery, are there any
10 specific rules related to delivery that are
11 overly burdensome or unnecessary?

12 Raise your hand if you have any
13 questions. And remember, we're going to write
14 rules and regulations, so this is your
15 opportunity to advise us regarding delivery.

16 So the current delivery rules, are
17 there any that you believe are overly burdensome
18 or unnecessary?

19 This is for anyone.

20 MR. BARNETTE: This is Corey Barnette.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr.
22 Barnette.

23 MR. BARNETTE: Yes, to that I would
24 say that there are two in particular. And I
25 think there have been comments in testimony

1 previously that speak to them. Currently under
2 the delivery requirements you are only allowed to
3 have one vehicle. That is obviously overly
4 burdensome. We have a city that experiences
5 significant amounts of congestion at times.
6 Obviously in a pre-COVID world.

7 But if a driver is going, let's say to
8 northwest and then has a call or a need in
9 southeast, then that could be hours before people
10 are able to get access to their medicine under
11 the medical marijuana program. And so that does
12 place, what we think, is a significant burden.
13 And so, the relief of the one car provision to
14 allow the operators to staff or have vehicles in
15 accordance with their demand load is something
16 that we would ask.

17 And then secondly, I would say that
18 the requirement that drivers be actual employees
19 of the dispensary can place certain, it makes it
20 difficult to have a third-party provider at
21 times. And I think that if we get some relief
22 there it makes it easier to put together, or hire
23 companies to actually provide the service.

24 If the dispensary didn't want to own
25 vehicle and insure vehicles themselves, it

1 creates an opportunity for them to make better
2 partnerships with third-party providers. But
3 these are the first two that come to mind.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
5 Barnette.

6 MS. GREENE: I'd like to --

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead.

8 MS. GREENE: Chairman?

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Please.

10 MS. GREENE: I just want to let Mr.
11 Barnette know, ABRA has already changed from one
12 delivery vehicle to three. So each dispensary
13 can have up to three drivers and three delivery
14 vehicles, I believe. I know it's at least three.
15 It may be --

16 MR. BARNETTE: Right. I was speaking
17 to the way that the legislation was originally
18 written.

19 MS. GREENE: Okay.

20 MR. BARNETTE: And I guess what I'm
21 suggesting is that each dispensary should be able
22 to decide how many vehicles they need.

23 MS. GREENE: Okay.

24 MR. BARNETTE: Or if it is a third-
25 party provider, the third-party provider should

1 be able to use as many vehicles as necessary to
2 service demand. And so, if we go a world where
3 we do have third-party providers, even if you
4 restrict a third-party provider, if that third-
5 party provider has more than two or three
6 different clients, or whatever, then you're
7 simultaneously preventing their ability to be
8 effective for everyone. Everyone of their
9 clients. And so, I would just suggest that the
10 number of vehicles be limited only, be determined
11 by the operator that is actually doing the
12 service or providing the service.

13 MS. GREENE: Okay. Okay, thank you.
14 But I do want to make a comment that we would
15 really like to be able to deliver to our state
16 registered medical marijuana patients any place
17 that they are in the District of Columbia, not
18 necessarily to their home. People get sick, they
19 have to move in with a sibling or a child and,
20 you know, all types of things happen.

21 And they cannot get their medication
22 for home delivery if that's the case because they
23 are not at their residence. So they would
24 actually have to come into the dispensary. So
25 they should, if you have a legal and valid card,

1 you should be able to get your delivery anywhere
2 you are in the District of Columbia.

3 Also, I would like to see us, and this
4 is someway, this is a way that we can really
5 combat the illegal market, which is killing us
6 that are licensed, to be able to deliver to
7 legally licensed out of state patients who are
8 staying in D.C. where they are staying. And so
9 those are, I think those are the two most
10 cumbersome. Oh, the other thing is for
11 caretakers to be able to come to the vehicle to
12 get the medications. To get the medications,
13 rather than have the patient actually come down
14 with the caretaker to get it.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
16 thank you. Thank you, Ms. Greene. Any other
17 comments from anybody regarding --

18 (Simultaneous speaking.)

19 MR. JACKSON: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who is this?

21 MR. JACKSON: Yes, this is Bryan
22 Jackson, again, from DC Holistic Wellness. I
23 just, again, want to tell the Board, last night
24 we saw what happened with the senate. And a lot
25 of changes are going to be coming to the industry

1 very fast, sir. So, I would like to see the most
2 robust program, every program rolled out by the
3 program that is run by the dispensaries. Because
4 in a year from now, if we do third-party, we
5 might be looking at a Wild Wild West out there in
6 terms of the very market might even get worse
7 after legalization. After federal legalization.
8 So I just wanted to get that out there.

9 And I also would like to ask the Board
10 if they could consider having a hearing on social
11 equity Rule 4. I have a number of comments on
12 it. And I just really don't think that having a
13 conversation on social equity while discussing
14 delivery is even appropriate. So, I would love
15 to have the Board to schedule a meeting going
16 forward to discuss social equity. Because,
17 again, we're going to have a lot of changes
18 coming into law soon. And D.C. doesn't want to
19 be left looking bad.

20 We've had this program running now
21 since 2014. You have New Jersey coming online.
22 And I think that the Board needs to really look
23 at moving swiftly, to create the most robust
24 program of license holders as they can and not
25 get into trivial matters like third party

1 services and things of that nature. Thank you
2 very much.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. Any
4 other comments about --

5 MR. SPENCER: Yes, I'd like to chime
6 in on the issue of employee, delivery drivers
7 having to be employees.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And this is Mr.
9 Spencer.

10 MR. SPENCER: Yes, this is Mr.
11 Spencer.

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

13 MR. SPENCER: Yes. That, you know,
14 when we look at Massachusetts and these other
15 states with delivery, they do that for a reason.
16 To allow men and women who have been harmed by
17 the war on drugs, to participate. So, by
18 restricting them to being an employee under the
19 dispensary, the dispensary becomes a one stop
20 shop, and there is no equity and there is wealth
21 building in the community. A lot of these men
22 and women, granite, Returning Citizens and the
23 like, are delivery drivers for Uber, Amazon. So
24 they already know the nuances of traffic,
25 delivering packages, delivering goods, delivering

1 services for that matter.

2 So I think by having this conversation
3 on delivery you have to have the conversation on
4 social equity. I mean, when you think about
5 cannabis you have to have that conversation. It
6 can never be an afterthought. Because 90 percent
7 of the industry is controlled by Whites. Ninety
8 percent of D.C.'s arrest rate for cannabis is for
9 Blacks. So we have to find a medium there.

10 MR. PICKETT: Mr. Anderson?

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, hold
12 on.

13 MR. PICKETT: Mr. Anderson, Norbert
14 Pickett.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who's speaking?
16 (Simultaneous speaking.)

17 MR. JACKSON: I would like to just
18 comment really quickly on this. I respect the
19 comments --

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on.
21 Identify yourself.

22 MR. JACKSON: Oh, I'm sorry. Bryan
23 Jackson, DC Holistic Wellness. One thing that I
24 want to say, Mr. Spencer, is I live in Ward 7. I
25 live about ten blocks away from the dispensary

1 that I work at. I started out as a delivery
2 driver. I worked part-time here. I worked
3 through the ranks and now I'm a general manager
4 here after a year. It's very important that, you
5 know, employment for me means that I had a chance
6 for my job. You know, a career for me means now
7 that I have a retirement plan.

8 You know, Uber and Lyft are cool, Uber
9 and Lyft don't have a pension. I just wanted to
10 leave that out there for you.

11 MR. PICKETT: Mr. Anderson?

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
13 Jackson. All right. Anyone else wants to
14 comment?

15 MR. PICKETT: Yes, Mr. Anderson. This
16 is Norbert Pickett, I'd like to comment.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Pickett.
18 Mr. Pickett, do you have a camera? And the
19 reason why, I've never met you, sir, and I'd at
20 least like to see what you look like. That's the
21 only reason, if you have one.

22 MR. PICKETT: Absolutely. I thought
23 it was on, I'm sorry. Is it working now?

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes. Yes, it's
25 on. Go ahead, sir.

1 MR. PICKETT: Okay, great. Thank you.
2 And nice to meet you, I guess, via camera. I'd
3 like to add that because we are unionized, we're
4 not using third-party like Uber and Lyft, it
5 gives us, my employees have benefits. They're
6 delivery guys. And they have a wage scale, and
7 they get raises. So that, to me, is simply to
8 keep it in-house. Also, what happens when a
9 third-party breaks the regs or breaks the laws,
10 who is accountable?

11 Is the third-party accountable now or
12 is it the dispensary is accountable who hired,
13 retained the services? You can't also have
14 third-parties having access to patient's
15 information where cannabis is being transported
16 to. I think all of these, I don't, I think, I
17 mean the current systems were working just fine.
18 Like I said, we're in Ward 7, east in the city.

19 We deliver to northeast, southeast,
20 southwest, northwest, northeast. I mean, we have
21 had no issue delivering cannabis seven, eight,
22 nine deliveries a day in the amount of time we've
23 had to. Now, the city is all torn up right now
24 because of construction, but I feel that a third-
25 party is not needed. I think two to three cars

1 should be sufficient. I think expanding the
2 hours will accommodate having additional cars,
3 that way patients can pick up later or earlier.
4 So I think, other than that, I think ultimately a
5 third-party would be bad for the program.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
7 What are other people's view regarding third-
8 party? I'm just asking. I mean, what are,
9 please -- yes, go ahead, Mr. Washington, and
10 whoever else wants to speak up.

11 MR. WASHINGTON: Okay. Again, I'm
12 going to note the distinction between a third-
13 party in case there is a, third-party, I don't
14 know anything about third-parties. I was kind of
15 shocked to hear that a third-party was already
16 operating in D.C. And I don't want to assume
17 that it was going on before the Mayor even
18 initiated delivery services in D.C.

19 But I believe the Mayor has made it
20 clear that there is a barrier. And I think I
21 heard someone say this is not the appropriate
22 time to speak on behalf of social equity. And
23 maybe someone did say that or not. But there is
24 a barrier. And this is the window to bring this
25 up or otherwise it may be a window or door that

1 may close. But the sentiment that I'm hearing is
2 that the existing dispensaries are just making it
3 exclusive for themselves. But this is the
4 window. Is this the area of social equity, it
5 cannot be avoided.

6 And California is already doing it.
7 They have a non-storefront retail delivery
8 license for social equity applicants. In fact,
9 California put a five year moratorium on the
10 existing dispensaries and actually took the state
11 to court. But it's still in mitigation at this
12 point. California recognizes it that at some
13 point we have to get in. And for a delivery
14 license on a warehouse storing cannabis that's
15 purchased from an existing cultivation center,
16 the drivers or whatnot, the companies, who owns
17 those companies can be signing the metric, it is
18 no different than an existing brick and mortar
19 dispensary. It's just a mobile dispensary.

20 Same rules, same liabilities. Nothing
21 is going to change. I can draft the legislation,
22 I'm good at that. I can do it. But I just think
23 that this is the window. You know, non-delivery
24 storefronts, they can have pension plans.
25 They're companies. Don't see the difference.

1 I'm done.

2 MR. SPENCER: Hey, Chair, I just have
3 one, just one point.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Identify
5 yourself please.

6 MR. SPENCER: This is Eric Spencer.
7 First off, Mr. Bryan, your comments are much
8 appreciated. But I just want the Board to know
9 one thing. There is a fundamental difference
10 between employment and ownership.

11 MR. JACKSON: Absolutely.

12 MR. SPENCER: A fundamental
13 difference. Number one. And number two is, if
14 the District was to create delivery licenses like
15 other states, for social equity, then they would
16 be able to monitor it. So I just wanted to put
17 that out there. I mean, I think I'd like to know
18 that this industry that suffers so much, that's
19 important that we should all be thinking about
20 ownership. Working is cool but ownership creates
21 a generation of wealth. Something that has been
22 lacking in an African-American neighborhood.

23 And I say this in conclusion. By
24 allowing men and women, some have been
25 incarcerated or some have been harmed by the war

1 of drugs, to offer delivery services, then they
2 can have three vehicles. So, which three
3 employees, yes, a owner, that's four individuals
4 creating equity in a Black neighborhood that's
5 been harmed by the war on drugs. So I just
6 wanted to put that out there. Thanks.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
8 Spencer.

9 MR. JACKSON: And there is a moment I
10 just want to comment.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who is speaking
12 please?

13 MR. JACKSON: Bryan Jackson, DC
14 Holistic Wellness. Mr. Spencer, your very, your
15 points are very valid and I appreciate you man
16 and all the work that you're doing. The thing
17 that I want to make clear to the Board is that,
18 and I want to make clear to everybody on this
19 panel, is that the District did not do the laws,
20 they did not write the laws in 2014 the right way
21 in the first place. Social equity should have
22 been included for cultivation licenses, for
23 dispensary licenses.

24 So the only point that I would like to
25 make to everybody is that I want to talk about

1 social equity in terms of ownership, in terms of
2 cultivation, in terms of dispensaries so that
3 then I can have three delivery vehicles and then
4 I can employee people from my community. What I
5 don't want to see happening, and what I think is
6 going to happen here in the District,
7 unfortunately, is that we're going to shoehorn
8 this thing. And we're going to end up with just
9 delivery.

10 So I want to just put on everybody's
11 mind that the pot is much bigger. And we must
12 have this conversation around cultivation.
13 Cultivation is the money maker, the dispensary is
14 the middle man. We have, I'm sorry, Mr. Spencer,
15 you probably know a little better, but you gave
16 us the number of licenses that are billed, I
17 believe it's ten, cultivation licenses are
18 minimal. How many are in operation? I'm sorry.

19 MR. SPENCER: It's eight operator,
20 seven by White individuals, one Black, and none
21 by Returning Citizens. I spoke about the
22 licenses.

23 MR. JACKSON: So let me make this
24 point. I've worked on this cultivation
25 facilities, both in Maryland and the District of

1 Columbia. I know for a fact that out of the
2 seven licenses that are here in the District, two
3 companies hold two licenses, and one is a
4 mortgage state operator. So we've already had
5 this conversation. Let's bring all the knives to
6 the table.

7 MR. SPENCER: Absolutely.

8 MR. JACKSON: What I want to make
9 clear to you guys is that, yes, I'm in agreeance.
10 And we, you know, I want to start a little social
11 equity program for delivery, that's fine and
12 that's cool. But it's a big problem in this
13 industry as a whole. And it's a way coming our
14 way. And if we shoehorn and we just focus on
15 delivery, we're missing the big point. So, I
16 just want to make that clear to everybody. That
17 provisionally these laws, they should be
18 revisited as accomplished.

19 And what we really need to talk about
20 is talk about is true ownership. Provide the
21 owners clarification and employee can own his
22 dispensary and then have a transportation
23 company. That's what it's about. So I just want
24 people to get the short end of the stick. And
25 I'm not against, I'm not against social equity in

1 any way. I now understand, and what I've
2 explained to the industry, is that I had to get
3 it any way I could. But another gentleman talked
4 about work 15 years in a facility and treated the
5 wrong way, you know, I was spraying pesticides,
6 getting paid the least, working 12 hours a day to
7 put product out in cultivation facilities.

8 I've done everything I can do to apex
9 of my career, and there's no ceiling. It's a
10 ceiling. There is no line for licenses for me.
11 I can't do nothing else. Me going and starting a
12 delivery service, that don't make sense. So
13 let's raise the bar on return to social equity.
14 And that's all I'm saying. And I appreciate
15 everybody's time. And I definitely appreciate
16 you guys giving us the time to actually discuss
17 social equity.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

19 MS. GIBSON: Hello.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
21 Spencer and Mr. Jackson. Was someone wanting to
22 say something?

23 MS. GIBSON: Yes. This is Shara
24 Gibson, Cannaventures. Hi. I just wanted to
25 offer a really quick comment. I think both of

1 you all are providing some very excellent points
2 around ownership versus employment for Returning
3 Citizens, but it's also, in my experience,
4 regardless of where we fall or what side of the
5 fence we fall on this, there has to be some sort
6 of technical assistance and training.

7 So, we have to give the licensed
8 businesses some things that they can do while
9 these Returning Citizens are being trained to
10 either go into employment, go into business or
11 both. So I would just encourage the Board to
12 really look at, again, existing programs in
13 either DOES or other programs that we can
14 benchmark from other jurisdictions. There has to
15 be some sort of technical training involved.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

17 MR. ALDRICH: Hello.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. Who
19 wants to say something?

20 MR. ALDRICH: Hello.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm going to
22 move on to have other Board Members to ask
23 questions. But who wants to --

24 MR. ALDRICH: This is Jason Aldrich.
25 I just wanted to offer a final point along the

1 lines of the dialogue that was taking place. And
2 that is, before the existence of Uber, the D.C.
3 Department of Vehicles or the department that
4 runs the cab licenses and everything, they were
5 almost, not nonexistent, but they weren't as much
6 of a factor as they are today with the
7 implementation of Uber and independent drivers
8 and drivers being considered independent
9 contractors. There was a whole development that
10 D.C. was able to benefit from as far as people
11 needing their, what they call the limousine
12 license or the for hire license.

13 So I think that D.C., with the
14 development that is taking place in that
15 department over the last several years with the
16 implementation of Uber and Lyft and drivers being
17 required to have their for hirer license through
18 D.C., I'm sure there would be a seamless, maybe
19 not seamless, but an opportunity to introduce
20 that the drivers of these agencies and
21 dispensaries, instead of, you know, not instead
22 of but in addition to maybe being agents of a
23 dispensary or if they are third-party, that they
24 have to go through D.C. Department of Vehicles
25 for Hire to obtain a certain license and go

1 through the proper background checks and the
2 proper protocols to ensure that they are
3 qualified to do the work.

4 I'd also add that a lot of times when
5 Returning Citizens come home, there is not, there
6 is nothing in place for them to have assistance
7 as far as clearing up past tickets, past driving
8 records, past other areas that prevent them from
9 being the one main thing, and that's just gaining
10 identification and gaining licenses. So that
11 also needs to be talked about when we're talking
12 about building the social equity program, that
13 things are in place in order to make sure that
14 the resources are there for citizens that want to
15 participate in the program and have the resources
16 to go through the proper channels to participate
17 successfully.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
19 thank you, Mr. Aldrich. Hold on, Mr. Washington.
20 Are there any Board Members who have any
21 questions that they want to ask? They want to
22 put out there. Any Board Members who have any
23 questions that they want to ask, since we have
24 all these folks here. I have some other
25 questions I can ask, but are there any questions

1 --

2 MEMBER SHORT: I just have one, Mr.
3 Chair.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr. Short.
5 Go ahead.

6 MEMBER SHORT: Regarding the delivery,
7 the vehicles, I heard the discussion, briefly,
8 regarding GPS on the vehicles. I think that's a
9 very great way to keep track of exactly where the
10 deliveries are going. And if there was a plan,
11 if someone took a truck from, or hijacked a
12 truck, then the police department would have a
13 way to trace it. But if you use the telephone,
14 delivery could be anywhere. And I don't think
15 that should be allowed. That's just my opinion.
16 But I'd like for anybody else who wants to speak
17 on that. But I really think that the trucks
18 should have security. And part of that security
19 would be the GPS.

20 MR. JACKSON: This is Bryan Jackson
21 from DC Holistic Wellness. I'd like to speak to
22 that, Mr. Short.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
24 Jackson.

25 MR. JACKSON: Part of the metric

1 protocols of the detailed tracking system, we
2 have to put a planned route in turn-by-turn. So
3 that's, you know, it merely talking about job
4 creation. Someone has to come in and put in a
5 route every day, put the deliveries into metric.
6 So ABRA gets the turn-by-turn directions for the
7 delivery address before the driver even departs
8 the vehicle. Right after it's put into the
9 system.

10 MEMBER SHORT: Thank you. I
11 appreciate that information. Thank you.

12 MR. PICKETT: I would just to like add
13 to that. This is Norbert Pickett.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
15 Pickett.

16 MR. PICKETT: Yes. We also, every
17 Monday before noon, we send a report of all the
18 deliveries that were performed the week before.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
20 Thank you. All right, any other questions by any
21 other Board Members? All right, let me see.

22 MEMBER CROCKETT: This is Ms.
23 Crockett. I have a question for the dispensaries
24 who are currently delivering. Regarding one that
25 Mr. Pickett just referenced regarding sending

1 these reports weekly to ABRA involving all of
2 their deliveries. And there is also MPD
3 reporting requirement. And so, I would like to
4 know from the dispensary owners, is that owners,
5 is that easy, like, what is your feeling about
6 this MPD reporting requirement in particular?

7 MR. PICKETT: I can address that, Ms.
8 Crockett, if you like?

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Pickett,
10 please. I want everyone, we have a court
11 reporter, so that's, when you're speaking I need
12 everyone to identify themselves. That's why
13 because we have a court reporter who is
14 transcribing everything that occurs, okay?

15 MR. PICKETT: So I'm sorry, Mr.
16 Anderson. Yes, this is Norbert Pickett, owner of
17 DC Holistic. I find it beneficial to track
18 everything and to have transparency and to submit
19 reports once a week. At first, when we didn't
20 really have our bearings to run the program,
21 because we're owners, but I think now that we've
22 hit our groove with delivery we've created a
23 system within the operation, I think that it's
24 something that's needed and there is not a
25 problem for us to deliver that every Monday to

1 you. And to MPD.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr.
3 Pickett. Anyone else wants to opine on this
4 question?

5 MR. JACKSON: I want to say that's one
6 of the areas, this is Bryan Jackson, DC Holistic
7 Wellness. That is one of the areas that I will
8 have concern with, again, patient confidentiality
9 and security if a third-party was doing it. It
10 takes us probably about 60 to 90 minutes to
11 process the deliveries, which means after it gets
12 scanned into the POS, piece-by-piece it has to be
13 put into the seed to sale tracking system. So
14 that includes everything from the patient's
15 purchase history to their home address, et
16 cetera, et cetera. So I think that's one of the
17 area of concern when thinking about outsourcing
18 this to third-parties.

19 Our delivery driver has to sign the
20 manifest. So he creates the manifest. And then
21 after he completes the delivery, he is
22 responsible for having to sign it. So, if this
23 policy is going to stay in place its definitely
24 going to be necessary that it's an in-house
25 procedure. Because I see that getting completely

1 out of hand with the third-party.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
3 thank you. All right. I'm going to --

4 (Simultaneous speaking.)

5 MEMBER CROCKETT: Are there other,
6 sorry, are there other dispensary owners who can
7 chime in? And also, are there medical patients
8 on this line who may have an opinion regarding
9 information, their addresses or what might be
10 sent to MPD on a legal basis regarding their
11 medical cannabis purchases?

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on one
13 minute please. The question has been asked,
14 Board Member Crockett was the person who just
15 asked the question. All right, go ahead. Mr.
16 Washington?

17 MR. WASHINGTON: Yes, Mr. Washington
18 speaking. Milford Washington. I am a current
19 medical marijuana patient. I do not have a
20 problem with the protocols or the rules of the
21 Board as far as submitting my information to MPD.
22 If it's regulated, it's a regulated industry.
23 And I have to abide by the rules as far as any
24 information being compromised. I think that the
25 dispensary owners, or whatnot they have the

1 proper software in place to maybe avoid that.
2 That's not something that I am concerned about.
3 I mean, it's just, not at all.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I want to thank
5 you for --

6 MR. WASHINGTON: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
8 Washington.

9 MR. WASHINGTON: In fact, when you
10 look up the medical marijuana card, there is just
11 a number. There is no social security number or
12 anything of that nature, nothing. You know, I'm
13 of the mindset even if you did get my social,
14 what are you going to do. I mean, I don't know.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. I
16 just want to inform everyone, I am going to wrap
17 this hearing up at 1 o'clock. So I've extended
18 it, but we're going to wrap this hearing up at 1
19 o'clock. Just as an FYI. Any other comments
20 from anyone else?

21 MR. JACKSON: Yes. I would like to
22 say, Bryan Jackson, DC Holistic, I would like to
23 say, on the comment of patient confidentiality.
24 I don't have a problem with it. I can tell you,
25 we have a patient who is a direct, is a child of

1 a Congressman and he is very particular about his
2 information. And I think living in D.C.,
3 understanding that a lot of people work in secure
4 fields, that have security clearances, things of
5 that nature, there are people who are versed that
6 are giving up that information. I might be, but
7 I think it should be handled with care.

8 And that's the one thing that
9 encouraging people, District residents, to get
10 medical cards, is there are a lot of people who
11 are government employees and they have the reefer
12 madness on their mind and they can't be on the
13 registry or a list of some sort. So, it might
14 create some type of ease for patients not having
15 to go through that, but it doesn't cause a
16 problem for me. But that's something that is,
17 that is something that senators, a very political
18 town, a lot of people have security clearances.

19 MS. DAVIS: Hi, this is Courtney
20 Davis. I would like to chime in. Yes. As a
21 patient I don't, I did not know that my
22 information was being sent to the police
23 department. And I kind of would like to know
24 what the impetus is for that regulation and what
25 the police department does with that information.

1 I can understand having the delivery routes or
2 whatever I order sent to the ABRA, but if I go
3 into the dispensary, is that also sent to the
4 police department? I guess that's my
5 question/comment.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I am not able
7 to answer that question to you, but that's
8 something that the director, because this is new
9 to me. So I can't answer that question, but
10 that's something that we can look at and make a
11 determination if that's appropriate. But I'm not
12 able --

13 MS. GREENE: Mr. Chairman?

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- to answer
15 that question.

16 MS. GREENE: Mr. Chairman?

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who is
18 speaking? Oh, who is that?

19 MS. GREENE: Linda Greene.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Ms.
21 Greene.

22 MS. GREENE: Yes. I can tell you from
23 the dispensary side, when you come in, it's only
24 sent to MPD for home delivery.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. All

1 right. All right, anyone else want to speak?

2 Identify yourself please.

3 MS. ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, this is
4 Yvette --

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Ms.
6 Alexander. Yes, I can now see you, Ms.
7 Alexander.

8 MS. ALEXANDER: Right. And that's one
9 thing, I wanted you to see me before the hearing
10 adjourned. But also wondering, because I hold
11 the position of the DC Medical Cannabis Trade
12 Association, would it be possible to you to
13 forward the questions to me and I could submit
14 them? I don't want to really give answers to any
15 of the questions without consulting with the
16 Association. So from social equity to the police
17 reporting, to any questions, additional questions
18 that you have with delivery service, I would like
19 to respond formally on behalf of the Association.

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
21 Thank you, Ms. Alexander. I'll talk to our
22 General Counsel, whether or not she wants to do
23 that on behalf of the Board. But thank you for
24 that offer. I just want to also state to
25 everyone who is participating in this hearing,

1 that if you have any prepared statements, that
2 you want to provide to us, you can send them to
3 abra.legal@dc.gov. So you are, if there is any
4 information that you want the Board to be aware
5 of, you are welcome to send your testimony or
6 your comments regarding this hearing to that
7 email address. And they will be reviewed and
8 incorporated in whatever decision that we make.

9 Are there any other Board Members who
10 have any questions that they want to raise? Now
11 let me ask a question. And I know that there is
12 not universal agreement on this, because this
13 hearing was on deliveries. But this is the
14 question. If third-parties were to permitted to
15 delivery medical cannabis on behalf of licensees,
16 would existing licenses use your service?

17 MS. GREENE: Okay, I'm a licensee so,
18 this is Linda Greene.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay.

20 MS. GREENE: I'll answer that. It
21 really depends. I mean, this is a business, and
22 obviously that would be an additional cost to the
23 business. I am also doing my, with my staff, who
24 are compensated extra for doing this. So I think
25 it should be an option for each of us. Depending

1 upon the number of deliveries, depending upon the
2 cost, depending upon the contract. We had to
3 weigh it individually in what is best for each of
4 us.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. Any
6 other, anyone else want to chime in?

7 MS. ALEXANDER: Yes.

8 MR. PICKETT: Yes. This is Norbert
9 Pickett --

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr.
11 Pickett.

12 MR. PICKETT: -- from DC Holistic
13 Wellness.

14 MS. ALEXANDER: Oh.

15 MR. PICKETT: So I would like to add
16 that, as I am a owner and a licensee, I would not
17 use a third-party. And that is because I want to
18 keep my patients confidentiality private. And
19 I'd like to, and there are things within a third-
20 party I can't control within my business and what
21 another business is doing. So DC Holistic would
22 not use a third-party for delivery. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right,
24 thank you, Mr. Pickett.

25 MS. ALEXANDER: And it was the

1 position of the DC Medical Cannabis Trade
2 Association that they would like to be given the
3 option whether they want to self-employee drivers
4 for the delivery or what constitutes a third-
5 party.

6 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

7 MS. ALEXANDER: (No audible response.)

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Ms.
9 Alexander. I see Mr. Jackson, you wanted to say
10 something.

11 MR. JACKSON: Yes. I'm not an owner
12 so I don't have a stake in that question, but I
13 would like to say, we just had a global pandemic
14 and more people are out of work. People need
15 permanent jobs. Third-party contracts, Uber
16 driving, you know, the District has an
17 opportunity right now to create jobs. And we can
18 do that by adding licenses owners.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
20 Another question I want to ask. And there might
21 be, and I get the sense that different people
22 have different positions. But how many vehicles
23 do licensees require, or believe they may
24 require, to engaged in deliveries as part of
25 their business?

1 MS. GREENE: Could you --

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: How many
3 vehicles do licensees require, or believe that
4 they may require, to engage in deliveries as part
5 of their business? I think I heard someone say
6 there should be unlimited. But if we're going to
7 put a limit on it, then I don't know if there
8 should be any limitation on vehicles. I mean,
9 what's your, what do folks out there believe,
10 because the purpose of this is on delivery. So
11 what is it that's being asked?

12 MR. PICKETT: Mr. Anderson, Norbert
13 Pickett from DC Holistic.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr.
15 Pickett.

16 MR. PICKETT: So, since we've
17 incorporated delivery back in April, I went out
18 and I bought a car and, a Prius, it's very
19 efficient gas, and that's the car we've been
20 using this whole time. It's been pretty solid.
21 We haven't had any issues. And I just don't find
22 that we needed a second car. We've been able to
23 service all of our patients, we've been able to
24 cover all of our patients in a timely fashion.
25 And I think that if worse case scenario, maybe an

1 addition of two or three cars, but no more than
2 three cars. I just don't think it's needed.
3 Based on the experience that we've had since
4 April. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
6 Thank you, Mr. Pickett. Let me ask for someone -
7 -

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on a
10 minute. Let me ask. And I don't want to put,
11 hold on a minute. But let me ask Rabbi Kahn, and
12 I don't mean to pick on you, and the reason why
13 I'm picking on you or your family, because you
14 said you were one of the first and the oldest one
15 in the group. Do you have an opinion on this
16 issue?

17 RABBI KAHN: My mute is off and my
18 video is starting, I hope.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.

20 RABBI KAHN: We were hoping for
21 delivery for a long time. We've been talking to
22 all kinds of folks, both at the Department of
23 Health, and actually, even with ABRA people over
24 the last couple of years. So we're thrilled to
25 be able to have the opportunity to deliver. I

1 think that we've all seen the pandemic, how
2 important delivery is. But we also recognize
3 that the brick and mortar, changing to delivery,
4 seems to be a thing of life in the District of
5 Columbia. It's hard to believe that after a
6 pandemic, folks who are returning to preferring
7 to transport across town to get somewhere to
8 purchase something that they may get delivered.

9 You've heard from some folks who have
10 mentioned some of the dozens and dozens of
11 delivery companies that are regulated, that
12 function in the District. So the delivery
13 certainly meets a very important need. We've
14 been doing this successfully since first being
15 given permission. We've been working with
16 Highroad. We've been using the maximum of two
17 cars. Three. I'm not sure why they need to
18 limit cars, but maybe there is. It should be
19 something like one and might have to be four to
20 have to go to the regulators to be able to add a
21 fourth car. It seems like that would be, well,
22 what would be the purpose of that. But I don't
23 know.

24 But certainly, we support delivery.
25 We think that it would, it's solid. Other

1 dispensaries don't want to deliver, want to
2 deliver in a different way. We've had security
3 guards since we've opened and that's something
4 that we elect to do. We've used outside security
5 services. Other dispensaries don't have security
6 guards. Other dispensaries have security guards
7 that work full-time for the dispensaries.

8 I think things like that, we've all
9 managed to have different business models that
10 work for us that are within the regulations. And
11 so I think that for delivery I don't think that
12 there is a real need to limit cars between two or
13 three or four or five. Obviously, nobody is
14 going to be putting out a fleet and that we need
15 to be able to serve our patients in timely way.
16 So I don't think there is a need for a limit.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
18 Thank you. Let's move on because, since you have
19 stated that you're one of the oldest --

20 RABBI KAHN: Sure.

21 (Simultaneous speaking.)

22 RABBI KAHN: I appreciate, look
23 forward, anytime, to be able to give you some of
24 the history of the weed runners.

25 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Is

1 there anyone else who has --

2 RABBI KAHN: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- just to give
4 their perspective on delivery? I'm looking for
5 some other voices because --

6 MEMBER CROCKETT: Chairman, can we
7 heard from Michael Bobo, from National Holistic?

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Are they still
9 on?

10 MEMBER CROCKETT: I see them on the
11 screen.

12 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes. Yes. Do
13 you have an opinion? And we're not trying to put
14 you on the spot, we're just trying to get a sense
15 of, I know there are difference of opinions out
16 there, and I heard Mr. Pickett's position, I've
17 heard Ms. Greene. I don't know what the Board is
18 going to do and we're going to look at in making
19 a decision, because the purpose of this is on
20 deliveries. To determine what it is that when
21 we're writing rules and regulations, what's
22 appropriate, what is this, should we do third-
23 party, where are folks in industry, what is
24 occurring in other jurisdictions.

25 So that's one of the purpose of

1 making, having this public hearing so we can
2 gather information. And then once we write rules
3 and regulations, then we, moving forward, we have
4 rules and regulations in place to regulate this.
5 And as, and I don't know what's going to happen.
6 I don't know yet. So anyway, anyone else, I know
7 that we had picked on Mr. Bobo, but Mr. Bobo did
8 not respond. So if you are someone else who
9 wants to speak who has not spoken, please. All
10 right, I'm going to wrap this hearing up in eight
11 minutes.

12 And before I wrap up, is there any
13 burning issue anyone wants to, who has not
14 spoken, that they want to bring to our attention
15 regarding delivery or social equity? And we
16 probably, it appears that I would probably, I
17 probably would suggest to our director that we
18 have another, that we have a public hearing on
19 social equity. That this is a large issue.

20 I, myself, am not very comfortable
21 with it. And so, I will be very curious for us
22 to have another public hearing at some point, to
23 discuss this issue to see what is it, what other
24 jurisdiction, what works for other jurisdictions,
25 what are some positives, what are some negatives,

1 and what is it that the District should do, or we
2 should do, in coming up with such a program. So
3 I do support having a public hearing on sort of,
4 to further discuss this issue.

5 MR. ALDRICH: I just had one quick
6 question.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who is
8 speaking?

9 MR. ALDRICH: This is Jason Aldrich,
10 Reset Wellness.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.

12 MR. ALDRICH: I just wanted to know
13 what is the, what does it look like for follow-
14 up? I know that this is a preliminary issue and
15 a preliminary task. I think a lot of people
16 present here today had solid things to offer.
17 And people want to offer their services and
18 expertise. I just wonder what the follow-up
19 looks like to continue the conversation about
20 social equity and continue the conversation about
21 how the delivery services will be developed for
22 the District of Columbia medical marijuana
23 program?

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: As I stated
25 before, and I placed the email address on the

1 chat, so you are welcome to send in some comments
2 regarding your position on deliveries in the
3 chat, or social equity in the chat. If and when
4 the Board develops rules and regulations
5 regarding deliveries, it will be open to public
6 hearing. So we'll have, I'm sorry, so once rules
7 and regulations are issued, then they will be
8 issued for public comment.

9 And so, we will consider that. I'm
10 not sure if we'll have hearings on the rules and
11 regulations once they're issued, but we will
12 definitely have, there will be an opportunity for
13 the public to review the rules, comment, and then
14 the Board will revisit it and make a decision.
15 So, this is just preliminary, but you will have
16 many other opportunities to participate in this
17 process. We, as the ABRA Board, we are very
18 excited that we are now regulating this industry.
19 And we look forward to have a relationship with
20 you.

21 You might not always agree with
22 everything that we do, but one thing I will
23 promise you, is that we will listen to what you
24 have to say. We will always listen. I won't
25 promise you that we're going to do what you want,

1 but you will never leave by saying that this
2 Agency did not listen to what you have to say.
3 All right.

4 MR. ALDRICH: Could you, I'm pretty
5 sure, did you re-post it, I don't see it in the
6 chat?

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, I guess
8 maybe I'm bad at chat but it's abra.legal@dc.gov.
9 But I thought I was being very good responding to
10 comments in the chat, but I guess I wasn't.

11 MR. JACKSON: Mr. Anderson? Just a
12 little point on social equity.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Jackson,
14 yes.

15 MR. JACKSON: Bryan Jackson here. I
16 just really would like if we could have the
17 hearing to do other district agencies,
18 stakeholders, this is not going to be something
19 you guys are going to be able to tackle by
20 yourself at all. It's going to take RSA, which
21 is Rehabilitative Services, it's going to take
22 DSLBD, it's going to take the Economic Planning
23 and Development Office. It's not going to be a
24 feat that ABRA is going to be able to accomplish
25 by itself.

1 So to have a serious conversation, we
2 need to talk about capital, we need to talk about
3 development and property, and we need to talk
4 about business mentorship. So I think having a
5 couple other agencies involved in that
6 conversation is very important.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, I can't
8 say that we can force other agencies, we're going
9 to do our part. We're going to do our part as
10 the regulator agency for this industry. And
11 through the city council and through the Mayor, I
12 assure you that we'll try to make sure that
13 whatever we do, it will be a robust program that
14 will be rolled out. That I believe will have
15 plenty of input from the general public.

16 All right. Before I'm going to wrap
17 this hearing up, I want to thank all members of
18 the public and everyone who participated in this
19 hearing today. It's been very informative,
20 especially for me, to hear, to meet a lot of the
21 members of the industry. I know there are
22 probably others who have not participated in this
23 hearing today, but I do enjoy listening to you,
24 hearing from you. And we will take your comments
25 under advisement. And we will try to come up

1 with, at some point, with some rules and
2 regulations to cover this area.

3 But as I stated, you will have a say
4 in every decision that's made by the Agency
5 regarding the regulation of your industry. So
6 with that said, again, I want to thank you very
7 much for your active participation today. Thank
8 you very much for your time. Since everyone was
9 on, this was supposed to be scheduled to be
10 ending at 12 o'clock, but I see that there were a
11 lot of unanswered questions and folks were
12 excited to participate, and that's one of the
13 reasons why I decided to extend it through 1
14 o'clock.

15 And the only reason I'm ending at 1
16 o'clock, we do have to have lunch because our
17 calendar continues again at 1:30. So the Board
18 at least needs half an hour to get itself ready
19 for the rest of our day. But we also thought it
20 was important, just to have the entire morning to
21 listen to some of your concerns and comments.
22 And moving forward we'll try to put a significant
23 amount of time, in our calendar, to listen to
24 what you have to say in moving forward in making
25 decisions.

1 Okay. So thank you again for your
2 participation. And we have now, the Board will
3 then be in recess until our 1:30 hearing. And
4 will ask all Board Members, for us to return to
5 executive session. Thank you very much, and have
6 a great day. Thank you. Bye-bye.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
8 went off the record at 12:59 p.m.)

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Before: DCABRA

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