

## Planning Commission Public Comment for 1-18-2024

NAME:

Anthony Avalos

==== MEETING INFO ====

MEETING DATE:

2024-01-18

COMMENT TYPE:

Non-Agenda Comment

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:

POSITION:

I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK ON ITEM DURING PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

COMMENTS:

I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the current proposal for the Social Equity and Economic Development (SEED) program. While the initiative claims to promote social equity in the cannabis industry, it falls woefully short of addressing the historical injustices and systemic disparities caused by the war on drugs.

The SEED program's allocation of 18 new cannabis outlets, while commendable, follows failed policy in other cities that have not produced a single successful social equity business and lacks any mention of comprehensive community benefits needed to rectify the harm inflicted by the War on Drugs.

The criteria for Social Equity Applicants, though inclusive, do not go far enough to ensure true representation and redress past wrongs. Relying on a lottery system for the initial six permits risks perpetuating the advantage of the most capitalized entrants rather than uplifting those most affected by cannabis-related criminalization.

In summary, the SEED program, as currently proposed, is insufficient in its efforts to create a genuinely equitable cannabis industry. I urge the Planning Commission to recommend a reevaluation and enhancement of the proposal to ensure it prioritizes the needs of WarOnDrugs survivors and provides tangible, lasting benefits beyond the issuance of permits.