



June 12, 2023

The Honorable Marc Berman
Chair, Assembly Committee on Business
and Professions
1020 N St., Room 379
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 508 (Laird) – Support
As Amended May 9, 2023**

Dear Assembly Member Berman:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), we support Senate Bill 508 (Laird), which streamlines the State's review and approval of cannabis licenses when a local jurisdiction completes certain types of environmental review.

The Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA) establishes a dual regulatory structure for cannabis businesses: A person who wishes to engage in commercial cannabis activity is subject to regulation at both the state and local levels. In practice, local jurisdictions are often required to perform site-specific CEQA review for all license types, even for cannabis businesses like retail that are located in fully developed areas and pose no meaningful risk of environmental impact. Senate Bill 508 would provide that the Department of Cannabis Control is not required to serve as a responsible agency under CEQA if the local jurisdiction acting as lead agency has filed a notice of determination for the commercial cannabis activity following the adoption of a mitigated negative declaration, environmental impact report or a notice of exemption for a retail commercial cannabis project.

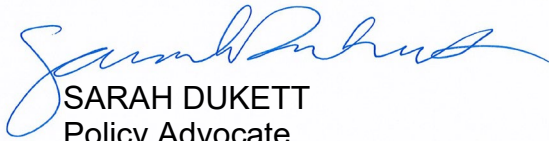
As the legal cannabis market struggles, we must ensure those coming into the legal market have a pathway to transition from provisional licenses to annual licenses with ease. Reducing duplicative efforts is an important tool for issuing licenses efficiently and effectively.

To enhance reliable access to regulated, tested cannabis in the legal market, streamlined dual licensing is necessary. SB 508 is a narrow approach that safeguards a robust CEQA review while shortening the time it takes to issue annual licenses. This will help ensure those in the legal cannabis market remain.

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For the above reasons, we respectfully request your “Aye” vote when this measure is heard before your Committee. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Dukett (RCRC) at sdukett@rcrcnet.org or Ada Waelder (CSAC) at awaelder@counties.org.

Sincerely,



SARAH DUKETT
Policy Advocate
RCRC



ADA WAELDER
Legislative Advocate
CSAC

cc: The Honorable John Laird, Member of the California State Senate
Members of the Assembly Committee on Business and Professions
Robert Sumner, Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Business and Professions
Bill Lewis, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus