



May 19, 2023

The Honorable John Laird
California State Senate
1021 O St., Ste. 8720
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Senator Laird:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), 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 posing 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.

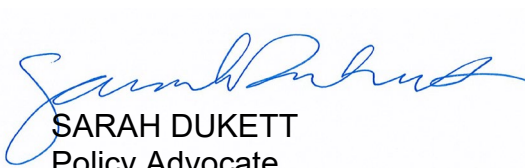
As the legal cannabis market struggles, we must ensure those coming into the legal market have a pathway to transition from provisional licenses to annual licenses with ease. Reducing duplicative efforts is an important tool for issuing licenses efficiently and effectively.

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 are pleased to support SB 508. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Dukett (RCRC) at sdukett@rcrcnet.org, Ada Waelder (CSAC) at awaelder@counties.org, or Elisa Arcidiacono (Cal Cities) earcidiacono@calcities.org.

Sincerely,



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Policy Advocate
RCRC



ADA WAELDER
Legislative Advocate
CSAC



ELISA ARCIDIACONO
Legislative Representative
Cal Cities