

Portland City Council Agenda
Written Testimony - Item 843

Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
1 843	Leia Flynn, Owner of Flight Lounge	Support with changes	Please see attached letter for Mayor Wheeler and our City Council members.	Yes	10/08/24 3:20 PM

October 8, 2024

Testimony in regards to CPOTS Recommendation #1

Economic and Social Equity

Dear Mayor and City Council,

I am Leia Flynn, the owner of Flight Lounge, the only private cannabis consumption space in Portland, which I have operated for the last nine years. Flight Lounge serves as a welcoming and inclusive environment for adults to consume cannabis responsibly, offering a community-oriented space where individuals can connect, learn, and enjoy their cannabis experience in a safe and legal setting. Our establishment has become a hub for social engagement, education, and advocacy, reinforcing the importance of responsible consumption within the cannabis community.

My journey in the cannabis industry spans over 20 years, beginning as a medical marijuana grower in the early 2000s. Through my experiences, I have navigated complex regulatory landscapes, advocating for patient rights and community needs, all while ensuring compliance with Oregon's laws. I have been working with Attorney Leland Berger for the past 15 years, focusing on compliance and legal advocacy for cannabis businesses.

While I agree with certain aspects of the recommendation for creating a new license type for cannabis businesses to sell at events, I have significant concerns about its focus. The statistics shared within the recommendation highlight the need for equitable cannabis consumption opportunities in our city, yet it primarily benefits businesses looking to sell cannabis at events rather than addressing the pressing needs of our residents.

The impact of legalization has been significant, providing numerous benefits to the economy and fostering a culture of responsible cannabis use. However, this progress has not translated into equitable access for all Portland residents. According to the data presented, nearly 47% of Portland residents are renters. Many from historically marginalized communities, including over 70% of Black and Hawaiian-Pacific Islander residents, face considerable barriers to legal consumption options. These communities often struggle with systemic inequities that limit their access to safe spaces for cannabis use.

The proposed recommendation fails to provide a viable solution for these residents, particularly those who cannot consume cannabis in their own homes due to legal constraints. For many renters, the fear of eviction or lease violations looms large, making it impractical or impossible to consume cannabis legally within their living spaces. This creates a disparity between those who have the privilege of home ownership and those who rent, exacerbating existing inequalities.

I urge you to support the recommendation while also recognizing the necessity for comprehensive solutions that address the needs of our community members. It is vital to remember the residents of our city who require accessible social consumption spaces. I invite you to visit Flight Lounge to witness firsthand the positive impact we have on our community and to better understand the importance of creating inclusive environments for cannabis consumption.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Leia Flynn
Owner, Flight Lounge

Portland City Council Meeting
Wednesday, October 9, 2024 - 9:30 a.m.
Verbal Testimony

Agenda Item	Name
1 843	Jake Granger