



November 15, 2010

To: Mayor/Community Developer/City Manager/City Attorney/City Council Members

RE: Council meeting scheduled for 11/15/2010 and the proposed Medical Marijuana [Marijuana] Ordinance

Dear Official,

As an elected official, please take a couple of minutes of your time to read this one and one-half page summary of critical information as it pertains to your pending ordinance for medical marijuana businesses at your November 15, 2010 meeting. The information that follows is vital for your understanding of an often misunderstood industry that carries with it a great deal of responsibility for the city, the businesses that operate within the city, and more importantly, the patients who rely on others for alternative treatment options. We have chosen to reach out to you through this correspondence because we feel that the three minute forum offered at a city council meeting will give little, if any information about our motivation to enter this market in Ann Arbor. First, let's take a look at some of facts that are often overlooked.

During the summer and fall of 2010, over 100 dispensary and growth type operations have begun service throughout southeastern Michigan. Most are not licensed and are operating without proper regulation or permission of local governments. To be quite honest, most of the individuals who run these businesses do so with impunity because they are savvy enough to know that once they are in a city, they are difficult to remove. The "windows of opportunity" that develop before, as well as between moratorium statuses, have created a proliferation of unregulated shops where security, purity, and "true" patient care are almost non-existent. Once a business is able to claim "patient hardship" as a defense for staying in business, the host city is essentially stuck with them unless they choose to incur enormous legal fees to prevent their existence. The problem here is that with a disregard for the law, also comes a disregard for other things such as patient safety, purity of dispensed medication, and a true working knowledge of the nuances involved in the medicinal cannabis industry.

Since the law was enacted in April 2009, many home based operations have also evolved that bring with them the negative outcomes that are correlated to the inability of most municipalities to police such "businesses." Once again, entering a private residence is a delicate matter that involves time, priceless law enforcement resources, and the possibility of negative press coverage. The home based operations, although a good source of income for the homeowner in uncertain economic times also brings with it the possibility of increased criminal activity in neighborhoods, the release of noxious odors into the air with larger amounts of vegetation, as well as the possibility of home fire hazards. The fire risk often results from "over-extended" electrical sources that are ill-equipped to handle the power necessary to run grow rooms as the cannabis matures through its various stages of growth to harvest. How many home based operations are expected to be equipped with fire prevention systems? This is cost prohibitive, and counter to the reasons that many people choose to enter the industry...fast financial gains without oversight.

If you consider the idea that one individual can grow up to 72 plants in his/her home which qualifies as an enclosed, locked facility under the current statute (if the patient is also a caregiver for the five patients allowed by law), the likelihood of the above mentioned scenarios becomes a dark reality. If we also consider the likelihood that many of the plant materials being ingested by the patient are being treated with pesticides, fungicides, or other synthetic properties to ensure a prosperous growth cycle, we are then forced to look at the negative health outcomes that are not protected by the FDA, HIPAA, or any other outlet designed to promote safe access to treatment, and medicine. This is where "safe and secure access" seems to be lost in translation. Lack of oversight, lack of integrity, and a lack of basic knowledge cannot be substituted at the expense of patients who are putting their trust in blind faith because no other options exist.

Our professional mission is to push a *clinical management model* of medicinal cannabis which has been largely ignored because the financial gains are not there for the majority of business owners, nor is the clinical knowledge there to work effectively with this population. There is a general lack of understanding when it comes to the illnesses that helped make the Medical Marijuana Act, 2008 a reality in the first place.

As an alliance of working professionals, we have consulted companies that have secured state bids for medical marijuana growth and dispensation facilities, provided multi-modal treatment to medical marijuana clients, and consulted with cities who struggle with the intricacies of a polarizing industry, and a poorly written state law. Our model is multifaceted and exemplifies safe and secure treatment, in an aesthetically pleasing clinical setting, while providing the transparency that is desired by many cities, but not offered by the majority of medical marijuana businesses. We have nothing to hide, because our model works to benefit all parties involved.

The Alliance Patients Group, Inc. is a Michigan Nonprofit Corporation who is in the business of “patient care.” Our focus is on the patient, which means that the safe, secure, and comfortable access of medicinal cannabis, as well as other treatment/educational options is available. Our directors and officers are a multidisciplinary team of doctors, attorneys, licensed psychologists, biochemists and consultants who cover a wide range of specialties, and all of whom are dedicated to patient care, and community safety. As working professionals, we are sensitive to the needs of the community, and make it our business to put the community first. Increases in city revenue, as well as reduced strains on local law enforcement are a part of our overall approach.

If you feel that this business model may work in your community, then perhaps a few minutes of your time could help to illustrate our intended long-term direction. Once again, we have opted out of coming into the industry “under the radar” because this undermines our position of transparency and building a true alliance with the host community. You will not find a medical marijuana business in this state, or any other state for that matter, which has our company name, our director’s names, or our officer’s names attached to it, that is doing business in an illicit manner.

In closing, we hope that the City of Ann Arbor has looked closely at the businesses that will be allowed to operate with licenses if this is your intended stance. In the event that you choose to offer permits, then it is also imperative that you exercise caution in issuing occupancies to those who find themselves “first in line.” Collectively, we have chosen Ann Arbor as the first city in the state where we think our model could open the doors for other municipalities. Our hope is that you would afford us the opportunity to present our ideas in a closed door session where a question and answer forum will shed light on a number of issues still not addressed in this letter. I will also leave a cellular extension in the event that you choose to speak directly with me about the nature of our company. Thanks again for your time.

Sincerely,

Richard Wooten, M.A., LLP, CAAC  
Executive Director, CEO  
Alliance Patients Group, Inc.  
ACT Centers of Michigan  
Cellular: (313)779-8400  
Office: (800) 775-8524  
[rwooten@alliancepatientsgroup.com](mailto:rwooten@alliancepatientsgroup.com)