

February 17, 2026

To: Sutter Creek City Council

Re: Consideration of a marijuana dispensary in the City of Sutter Creek

Dear Mayor Gunselman and City Council members,

I noted in your Administrative Agenda for your meeting of February 17, 2026, that you will be considering a development agreement for One Cannabis Dispensary at a set location.

As the former Sheriff of Amador County, law enforcement veteran of 46 years including 25 years with the California Department of Justice, and current Sutter Creek resident, I am writing to express my deep concerns over allowing such a business to exist within the city limits of Sutter Creek for numerous reasons which I will state below.

I would have much preferred to present to you in person, but I have been under the weather for over a week now.

My first concern is about the negative public safety impacts.

I have concerns that such a business will negatively impact our police department due to increased calls for service. We are blessed to have such dedicated officers providing safety to our community however, dispensaries can be a target for burglary, robbery and theft as proven in other jurisdictions resulting in impacts to other local law enforcement agencies as well who will respond as safety backup for our officers.

I will note here that Amador County maintains strict prohibition on commercial marijuana activity in all unincorporated areas as governed by Amador County Code Chapter 19.84 which includes the prohibition on retail marijuana operations. To the best of my knowledge, no other incorporated city in Amador County allows marijuana dispensaries which could lead to Sutter Creek being the countywide destination for retail marijuana and the issues that may arise as a result.

At the state level the California Department of Cannabis Control regulates marijuana dispensaries. I am concerned about how frequently they could expend their resources to inspect the one dispensary in Amador County when there are so many such operations in major cities and counties throughout the state.

While you must be 21 to purchase marijuana for recreational purposes, California law allows 18- to 20-year-olds to purchase and possess marijuana for medicinal purposes with a proper recommendation from a doctor, not a prescription, which is currently prohibited. Medical recommendations also allow the purchase of more marijuana than the 1-ounce recreational limit and provide access to higher dose products as well.

Additionally, I have learned through my training that people under the influence of marijuana are often not the same people who drive under the influence of alcohol, thereby increasing the potential threat of impaired drivers to the public.

By having the City of Sutter Creek and its leadership approve such a business, I believe that it sends the wrong message to our young people about the actual dangers of marijuana use. How bad could it be if our City Council approved of it?

It is a fact that marijuana potency today is much stronger than that of the 1960's and 70's. For example, in the 1970's marijuana potency averaged between 1% and 4% according to data from the Potency Monitoring Project. The highest THC potencies today consistently exceed the 30% mark and the highest up to 35%.

This new high potency marijuana has led users to experience psychotic episodes, permanent psychosis, addiction, and/or dependency.

In 2025 and 2026, there have been ongoing discussion and advocacy at the state level to restrict THC levels in Cannabis flower by capping it at 25% THC and capping marijuana concentrates at 60%. To my knowledge this has not been decided upon to date.

I believe such a business is also contrary to our community character, which is a family oriented, traditional small town community image, that we are so proud of and why many of us choose to live here and many more visit us every year.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my input on this very important issue for our community.

Sincerely,

Martin Ryan