

Hello my name is Suzanne Houck and I thank you for the opportunity to speak briefly about some of about my opposition to the proposed EMBARQ dispensary opening in Sutter Creek.

I believe a commercial pot shop will disrupt our historic, family-friendly aesthetic in our quaint town. Possible window displays, neon signs, and branding will clash with our rustic charm that all of us who live in Sutter Creek cherish.

I want to speak about my concern for our youth in our community.

Studies, such as those from the [U.S. National Library of Medicine](#), show that the physical presence of stores can normalize regular marijuana use, especially among young people who are highly impressionable.

Although, the legal age to buy marijuana is 21 those underage kids are going to find (plugs) friends, family, over 21 to buy it for them.

Over the past few years, marijuana use has been landing more young people in the hospital, according to a new study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Published in 2023 CDC's [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#), the report analyzed nearly 540,000 cases nationwide where people under 25 years old wound up in a hospital due to complications from cannabis use. From 2019 to 2022, the researchers found that cannabis-related emergency department visits increased overall among kids, teens, and young adults.

Over the study period, the researchers also noted large increases in cannabis-related ER visits among kids less than ten years old.

In June 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released an [alert](#) warning about children ages 2-10 accidentally ingesting products containing THC, the active ingredient in cannabis. According to the alert, many edible THC products mimic popular food brands, such as Cocoa Pebbles, Skittles, Starburst, cookies, candy, ice cream, sodas, and other sweet treats that are particularly appealing to children leading to cases of young children mistaking the edibles for snacks and experiencing symptoms like hallucinations, increased heart rate, and vomiting. Studies tracking emergency room data estimate thousands of pediatric poisonings presenting to U.S. hospitals annually.

While it is true that humans have used marijuana in some form for thousands of years, the marijuana of today looks nothing like the drug of the past. In the 1970s marijuana contained roughly 1–3 percent THC.⁴ Since then, market demand and a shift in consumption methods — largely driven by the marijuana industry — have led to a newer, much more potent form of the

drug. One study found that the average potency of the marijuana plant increased from 8.9% THC in 2008 to 17.1% THC in 2017. Meanwhile, concentrates — a new form of marijuana that are consumed in the form of edibles, tinctures, “dabs,” and vaping oils — contained an THC potency of 6.7% in 2008 and 55.7% in 2017. This study being older suggests that the percentage of potency has only risen.

There is so much more I would like say... but thank you for the 5minutes. For council members saying yes to this pot shop coming to town, I ask you to seriously consider the adverse impact it will have on our little community and vote no! This dispensary and the expected revenue it may bring in is not worth the damage our youth and our beautiful city will experience in the long run. Our board of Supervisors do not want it and I hope and pray you will all vote the same. Please vote no on Embarq buying their way into Sutter Creek and Amador County!