

ATTACHMENT

For Item

#31

Tuesday,
April 30,
2024

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION RECEIVED BY THE CLERK
OF THE BOARD

From: [Anthony Avalos](#)
To: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External] Board of Supervisors Meeting 4/30/24 Public Comment Item 31
Date: Tuesday, April 30, 2024 8:22:08 AM
Attachments: [CEA_SD Response to Equity Program.pdf](#)

Hello,

My name is Anthony Avalos, I live in district 3 and I am writing to submit a public comment on item 31. Thank you for your time and please let me know if there is anywhere else I can submit public comment as the e-comment section is not available for today's BOS meeting, thank you.

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Talk soon,

Anthony Avalos

4/30/2024

Honorable Supervisors,

My name is Anthony Avalos, representing the Council of Equity Advocacy San Diego. Today, I am providing written public comment to address the critical inadequacies in the proposed Social Equity Program (SEP) framework, which demands urgent rectification to truly serve justice to those most harmed by the War on Drugs.

First, the funding of \$350,000 for the SEP is paltry and insulting. This amount does not come close to matching the millions spent on enforcement over the decades. We demand a funding commitment that reflects a true attempt to rectify the damages of the past—not just token gestures. San Diego must not fall short in its moral and civic duty to right these wrongs.

Second, the proposed grant amount covering a mere 1.4% of the total cost to own and operate a cannabis business is laughably inadequate. This oversight sets our community up for failure and leaves them vulnerable to predatory practices that we've witnessed cripple similar intentions elsewhere. We insist on a substantial increase in funding to ensure that our entrepreneurs are set up for success, not dependency.

Third, the current "Social Equity Beneficiary Program" lacks the comprehensive, tailored support needed by survivors of the War on Drugs. We're not looking for a rehash of existing programs but for a robust, stand-alone suite of services that address the unique needs of these individuals. It's time for innovative solutions that extend beyond mere identification and into real, actionable benefits.

Furthermore, the imposition of license ceilings is a misguided strategy that will only inflate permit values and encourage speculative practices rather than sustainable business ownership. We demand that these artificial caps be reconsidered to foster a fair and equitable market.

Additionally, the SEP's failure to adequately recognize and address the specific harms done to our Indigenous communities and the compounded impact on all communities of color is a glaring omission. San Diego County must expand its criteria to inclusively address the historical and ongoing injustices these communities have endured.

We are at a pivotal moment. The Council of Equity Advocacy San Diego calls on this Board to pivot based on the failures of other jurisdictions, to learn from their shortcomings, and to courageously fund and structure a Social Equity Program that truly reflects the values of justice and equity.

This is your opportunity to set a national precedent—to show that San Diego County leads with action, not just words. We urge you to revise these recommendations to ensure they are not only inclusive but are also substantial enough to effect real change.

Thank you for your attention to these critical matters.