



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

3265 S Street, NW • Washington, DC 20007

(484) 885-8814 • anc2e@dc.gov

September 5, 2024

Mayor Muriel Bowser
Mayor
Government of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004
muriel.bowser@dc.gov

Chairman Phil Mendelson
Chair, Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004
pmendelson@dccouncil.gov

Fred Moosally
Director
Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Board
2000 14th Street NW, S400
Washington, DC 20009
abca.legal@dc.gov

Brian Hanlon
Director
Department of Buildings
1100 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024
brian.hanlon@dc.gov

Tatjana Savoy
Commander, 2nd District
441 4th Street, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20001
tatjana.savoy@dc.gov

RE: Resolution Regarding Need for Clarity on ABCA Proximity Measurements

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers, Director Moosally, Director Hanlon, and Commander Savoy,

On September 30, 2024 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by eight commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (8-0-0) with regard to the above referenced matter:

In 2024, ANC 2E began reviewing cannabis licenses as part of Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration (ABCA) formal, legal medical cannabis licensing process. At the time ANC 2E began receiving these cannabis licenses for review, many illegal cannabis establishments were already operating in our community. Many of these illegal

COMMISSIONERS:

Kishan Putta, District 1 Topher Mathews, District 2 Paul Maysak, District 3
Joe Massaua, District 4 Mimsy Lindner, District 5 Gwendolyn Lohse, District 6
Daniel Chao, District 7 John DiPierri, District 8

establishments are still, to our great dismay, operating in our community, yet, ANC 2E is being asked to approve the addition of more and more cannabis-related licenses to our community.

ANC 2E is very familiar with the concept of an ABCA license review and resulting Settlement due to ANC's long-standing role in ABCA's alcohol licensing process. For example, ANC 2E has Settlements with over 50 establishments that serve or sell beer, wine and/or liquor in our community. The time needed to draft these Settlements is a true community effort, resulting in improved community relations. ABCA staff are helpful and organized throughout the alcohol licensing process, and in any necessary enforcement.

In contrast, ANC 2E's experience over the last several months with the cannabis license review process has identified some significant gaps in the licensing and enforcement process; ABCA staff are trying but they require a better process and resources. These gaps negatively impact our community in a range of way including

- Posing public health issues for our children and adults.
- Compromising aesthetics.
- Negatively impacting community relations.
- Consuming unnecessary resources of establishments trying to use proper channels for their operations.

ANC 2E urges the Council members, ABCA and the Mayor to do the following immediately. Urgency is required in this area – we can not wait for resources to be assigned in the next budget cycle.

- **Clarify the ABCA Proximity Measurements:** Support the enforcement of all proximity requirements contained in the Medical Cannabis Amendment Act of 2022 and subsequent related regulations since the Medical Cannabis program launch. Critically, this includes the requirement that cannabis retailers be at least 300 feet away from schools and day care centers, not allowing summer gardens near schools/recreation centers, limiting the number of (legal) shops within a certain geographical area and providing quick clarification when questions arise. To that end, we request clarity concerning the method for determining proximity. ANC 2E believes the appropriate method is to measure property line to property line, not door-to-door. Finally, ABCA needs more resources to do this measurement work given the newness of this program.
- **Conduct Enforcement:** The illegal cannabis establishments must be closed. ANC 2E is no longer comfortable supporting the addition of new Medical Cannabis Applications while so many illegal shops remain. While there has been some progress in closing some unlicensed cannabis

businesses there are still approximately 15 recreational stores open in Georgetown alone; the overall number across the city is much higher. These are shops that offer a “gift” of cannabis with a purchase of another item, such as a t-shirt or a sticker. Give ABCA the resources – they currently have one enforcement officer – to close these illegal businesses so that we can support those properly licensed.

ANC 2E is glad to see the most recent Council dialog on B25-0581 - Medical Cannabis Clarification Amendment Act of 2023. ANC 2E supports the amendments of Councilmember Pinto, Bonds and Parker. However, we urge the Council to go further in addressing the measurements and enforcement issues outlined above – and providing the immediate resources to do so.

Commissioner’s Gwendolyn Lohse (2E06@anc.dc.gov) and Topher Matthews (2E02@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission's representatives in the matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwendolyn Lohse", followed by a horizontal line.

Gwendolyn Lohse
Chair, ANC 2E

CC: Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Ward 2
Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie, At Large