

Communications Plan
December 16, Board Meeting

Event

On December 15, 2015, the Liquor and Cannabis Board's (LCB) contracted consultant – BOTEC -- will deliver its commissioned report regarding the size of the current medical marijuana market.

On December 16, 2016, staff will make a recommendation to the Board regarding the number of retail stores that will be necessary to meet the demand of current medical customers transitioning to the regulated retail market.

Current Recreational Market

- 334 retail stores allotted
- 219 retail stores currently licensed
- 145 retail stores with medical endorsements (of 219 retail stores)
- Of 334 allotted, 89 are in locations with bans or moratoriums

Current Medical Market

- 331 open dispensaries in Washington (BOTEC)
- 477 medical marijuana businesses have paid taxes (Dept. of Revenue) w/in two years
- 145 retail stores have received medical endorsements
- 34 of 39 counties have stores with medical endorsements

Recommendation at a Glance

- The highest concentration of stores is needed in the most populous areas of the state.
 - Increase the number of stores in the ten counties with most populous cities (with the exception of Benton and Yakima Counties) by 100 percent.
 - Increase the number of stores in all other locations by 75 percent
 - The result is an increase of 222 stores (251 have not been licensed)
 - The total number of stores would increase from 334 to 556.
 - If every new store received a medical endorsement, there would be 367

Materials

- Governor's Alert (issued Monday)
- Media Advisory (issued Tuesday)
- Jeanne's store analysis (available at Board meeting)
- *At-a-Glance summary (TBD if necessary)*
- News release (issued Wednesday)

Media Communication Protocol

- Tuesday
 - Communications issues media advisory noting Board action and media availability
- Wednesday
 - Media availability immediately following ceremony.
 - Participants take turns standing at the podium with microphone (turned to face audience)
 - Communications issues news release immediately following Board meeting
 - Communications issues news release to listserv

Staff Roles

- Board (action on staff recommendation)
- Becky Smith (presents recommendation to Board, media availability participant)
- Rick Garza (media availability participant)
- Steve Davenport (media availability participant regarding BOTEC report methodology)
- Brian Smith (prepares issues media advisory, release and materials and subsequent media calls)
- Mikhail Carpenter (issues listserv announcement)

Outreach (Wednesday Morning)

- Russ Hauge
 - Tom McBride at WAPA
 - Brian Enslow (WA Counties)
 - Mitch Barker (WASPC)
- Rick Garza
 - Candice Bock (AWC)
 - Sandy Mullins (Governor's Policy Office)
 - Alison Holcomb (ACLU)
 - Ed Murray (Mayor of Seattle)
 - Marilyn Strickland (Mayor of Tacoma)
 - Pete Holmes (Seattle City Attorney)
- Peter Antolin
 - John Wiesman (Health)
 - Derek Sandison (Agriculture)
 - Vikki Smith (Revenue)
- Brian Smith
 - Jaime Smith (Governor's Communications Director)
- Becky Smith
 - Vicki Christopherson (Washington Cannabusiness Association)
- James Paribello (TBD by James)
 - Rep. Chris Hurst
 - Sen. Ann Rivers
- Mary Segawa
 - Derek Franklin (Washington Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention)

Communications Challenges (Risks)

- This is an issue that will likely have more detractors than supporters. The reason is that licensed recreational retail stores want less stores integrated into the market. Dispensaries want the maximum number of stores so they can be integrated into the system prior to the July 1, 2015 deadline.
- No one knows exactly how many dispensaries exist in Washington because many aren't registered or pay taxes. By its admission, BOTEC's numbers are not exact. Instead, they reasonably arrive at median "best estimates."

Key Messages

The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board is charged with aligning the medical marijuana industry with the existing recreational industry.

- The WSLCB is primarily concerned with licensing existing dispensaries using the priority-based system established by SB 5052.
- In September, the WSLCB engaged its contracted consultant– BOTEK Analysis, Inc. – to provide a thorough analysis of the overall size of the marijuana market.
- BOTEK delivered the final report to the WSLCB on Tuesday Dec. 15.
- The LCB has used the report as a basis to determine the number of additional retail stores necessary to meet the additional demand brought on by the integration of the markets.
- Per earlier analysis by the WSLCB and BOTEK, the counties with the highest population density will receive the greater number of stores.
- The Board will use a formula that provides a proportionally greater number of stores to the top 10 counties with the highest population centers with the exception of Benton and Yakima Counties which have bans within all major cities (such as Pasco and Yakima respectively).
- Breakdown
 - The Board will increase the number of stores in the ten counties with most populous cities (with the exception of Benton and Yakima Counties) by 100 percent.
 - The Board will increase the number of stores in all other locations by 75 percent
 - The result is an increase of 222 stores
 - The total number of stores will increase from 334 to 556.
- Today's update reflects the WSLCB's careful and deliberate work to establish a tightly regulated legal marijuana market in Washington.
- The number of retail stores the Board is issuing is reasonable and makes sense given the lack of factual data that exists today within the medical marijuana community.
- The Board has been open and transparent throughout the process.
- The WSLCB has moved quickly to ensure there is access to medical marijuana by July 1, 2016.

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