



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
CITY OF LONG BEACH

April 27, 2021

The Honorable Steven Bradford
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2059
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 603 (Bradford)—Cannabis License Deferral and Waiver Fee Program: Tax Credit

Dear Senator Bradford,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in support of SB 603. The Long Beach City Council unanimously approved a recommendation to support SB 603 on April 6, 2021. SB 603 proposes to implement an ongoing cannabis licensing fee waiver program and tax credit for licensing fees. The legislative proposal will provide relief to social equity cannabis businesses in Long Beach.

On July 10, 2018, the Long Beach City Council adopted a Cannabis Social Equity Program (Program), overseen by the City's Office of Cannabis Oversight, as part of a larger Adult-Use Cannabis Business Ordinance. The goal of the Program is to support equal opportunity in the Long Beach cannabis industry by making legal cannabis business ownership and employment opportunities more accessible to low-income individuals and communities most impacted by the prior criminalization of cannabis. The Program currently provides fee waivers, direct grants, and other assistance to equity applicants to help lower the barriers of entry to the cannabis industry. By establishing a fee deferral or waiver program to social equity cannabis businesses at the State level, SB 603 will help reduce barriers to entry, ultimately increasing the number of equity-owned businesses in Long Beach and throughout the State.

The City supports legislation that will help the City achieve the goals and strategies outlined in our Racial Equity and Reconciliation Initiative Initial Report (Report). One of the potential action items within the Report is to expand opportunities for cannabis entrepreneurship, with the goal of improving outcomes for investment in the burgeoning cannabis industry for Black people and people of color with opportunities for recruitment, business ownership, wealth building, and economic advancement. SB 603 will contribute toward this goal by providing economic opportunities for increased equity entrepreneurship in the cannabis industry.

For these reasons, the City supports SB 603.

Sincerely,

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District