

CITIZENS COMMENTS
APRIL 20, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING
SECOND READING COMMENTS

David Freeman

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As a resident of Orange, NJ I'd like to express my support for Cannabis Business to operate here in Orange. I do not support ordinance 14 - 2021 which would ban all cannabis business in Orange. We can all benefit from the tax revenue this would afford and there are responsible ways to regulate it. Please vote against this ordinance.

Sarah Z. Ahmed

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If the council of Orange votes to ban cannabis business, we risk losing out on major tax revenue for our city. It is clear the City of Orange, especially since my husband and I have moved here in 2019, could benefit from stronger infrastructure: public works that are available, better schools, cleaner streets, and cleaner greenways. These initiatives—which benefit everyone—cannot exist without tax dollars. If nearby townships vote to authorize cannabis businesses, the City of Orange will see an exodus of tax paying citizens, or at least, see their residents investing their money elsewhere. I urge my council people to vote NO on this ban on cannabis businesses.

Jose Gomez

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The citizens of New Jersey overwhelmingly voted to legalize cannabis. You'd be doing a great disservice to your citizens and local economy if there were to be a vote against the will of the people and banning the sale of cannabis in Orange. Ordinance 14-2021 should not be passed.

Gabrielle Pierre

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I am a resident of Orange, NJ. I have lived here my whole life and take pride in being from Orange. I have recently read about the current vote on 4/20 by City Council to ban cannabis businesses in Orange, NJ. Voting to ban cannabis businesses in our city will prevent the city from potentially making millions in tax revenues from these businesses. As controversial as cannabis may be, some of these businesses will allow the proper distribution of cannabis to be made instead of individuals selling them illegally. It will potentially help lower tax properties if allowed and improve our communities. No matter what, the cannabis industry is growing significantly and the consumption of cannabis will continue to grow with this ban or not. Orange should be able to benefit from this growing industry and allow the community to create these new businesses and help positively change our city.

Sharon Giles

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I am an Essex County resident born and raised, representing Education Through Achievement (also a New Jersey Company). We are asking The Council to reconsider and support Ordinance

14-2021 and allow legal businesses to operate in the City of Orange. We will be opening a Cannabis business in NJ and are very interested in opening in Orange. There are many community benefits to having a cannabis business located here like ours: Additional tax revenue for the city is very important, and improving lives, the social justice aspect. With the proceeds from our cannabis retail business, we will be opening a 150 -unit facility for at risk youth ages 6-17 and battered women. Certainly Orange will get a large portion of available slots. Our company wants to help rebuild our community, one that has been most ravaged by the war on drugs. As a responsible business owner, we will make sure that we operate within all the laws of the city and state as well as hire and train staff from the community. As more consumers come into the city foot traffic to restaurants and other establishments will increase. Thereby helping the town to prosper. Please reconsider the ordinance and how much these new businesses can contribute to the growth of the city.

Kweli Campbell

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I am both shocked and embarrassed for Orange, NJ to hear that there are esteemed and brilliant members of the council who have initially voted to ban all cannabis businesses within this township. I understand that Cannabis legislation comes with a fair amount of need for education for most. But, here we are at near the finish line and members of the council are still warming up? What about the 78% of Orange, NJ cheerleaders who are in the stands and who have voted for the legalization? How do you explain to them that they will receive none of the benefits that could change their very lives in so many ways? This is not about whether you agree with the use of Cannabis. This is about whether you agree with Orange receiving rightful benefits and tax dollars associated with sales related to Cannabis – same as you agreed with other drug and alcohol businesses that we see in our community – beer garden, countless liquor stores, and pharmacies and so on. May I also add the countless hours put in and spent to ensure social equity and justice related to Cannabis sales by numerous advocates and politicians? To deny Orange, NJ the ability to receive these benefits is a slap in the face to many and puts you on the wrong side of history. In the spirit of representation and not your personal views, please vote for what the people want! A prosperous Orange, NJ.

Anisa Rodriguez

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Why would the council deny the city an opportunity to make the money it desperately needs? If this ordinance passes successfully banning marijuana businesses from coming to Orange, it would be a significant slap in the face to the potential of orange progressing in any substantive way for years to come. Our city pools should be clean and operational and our historic library should as well. The 2% tax on marijuana businesses in orange could make that happen. Only the community suffers if they're excluded by Ordinance No. 14-2021. Vote it down.

Zuri Jones

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As an Orange resident for over 10 years and being raised here, I've seen an Orange with so much potential but never truly reaching it. I've seen peoples dreams be crushed, not encouraged or not helped for years and it has been a heartbreaking experience to watch. I think Ordinance 14-2021 and allowing cannabis businesses here in Orange can help to change that. I believe it can be an

amazing revenue stream here in Orange for years to come and be used as a way to help the dreams of our city and its residents flourish, be created into reality and be supported.

As a resident who plans to open a business here, seeing this lucrative industry come into Orange is exciting and would open the door to what possibilities I can do as far as my own businesses and aspirations. I know I'm not in the minority of this way of thinking either. I believe others in Orange see Cannabis businesses here as something, that hopefully thru regulations, becomes another avenue to make legit legal money and start generation wealth for their lineage. I believe others will see this as an opportunity to grow their business acumen here in their own city and others who see an opportunity to enter this booming industry in our own city.

I think not allowing Cannabis here in Orange would be the wrong decision for a lot of reasons. And I believe that having cannabis businesses here can be the first time in over 10 years that change begins to come.

Alexandra Laurore
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I am an Orange resident and I am currently living at 620 Lincoln Avenue. I am writing in regards to Ordinance no. 14-2021. I would like this correspondence to be a part of the citizen comments and the Public Hearing of an Ordinance section of the meeting being held on 4/20/21. I am writing to inform you that I am against the passing of this ordinance and believe that the sale of legal marijuana SHOULD NOT BE BANNED in the city of Orange. The legal sale of Marijuana will generate revenue, create opportunities for small businesses & make Orange a competitive member of this industry. I urge all the council people to vote down this ban.

Damani Bollow
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I am a young resident that has lived in Orange for over 10 years. I moved here from New York and went through Middle and High School in this town and I'm concerned about the leadership because bringing cannabis businesses into Orange in an absolute no brainer. First of all Orange roads are really bad. We don't have a library or an after school program for the children. Obviously taxes from the cannabis business would be able to fix all of that, not to mention all of the medical benefits of THC and CBD. Look at Colorado, after they passed the bill for cannabis everybody got extra money from taxes to be honest I don't know why this is even a debate or a situation if you vote against bringing cannabis into orange you don't want the best for the people of this town anybody that's objective can see this obvious opportunity.

Frank Barszcz
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WE URGE YOU TO VOTE AGAINST ORDINANCE NO. 14-2021 BANNING CANNABIS BUSINESSES IN ORANGE!

For the past 5 years The HUUB, Inc. has worked to enhance the quality of life for residents of Orange and the surrounding area by making our campus available to the community and providing programming in the arts, education and community development. We are a leader in disseminating information about protection from the spread of COVID 19 and keeping citizens informed about city policies that affect their lives. Our model for community engagement is

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Asset Based Community Development which calls us to build upon the strengths that already exist in the people and institutions of our community. **We are therefore in favor of safe and regulated business opportunities that bring revenue into the city and help entrepreneurial citizens to realize their potential.**

On November 3, 2020, residents of the City of Orange Township voted overwhelmingly in favor of Public Question # 1. On February 22, 2021, P.L. 2021, c. 16, was signed into law by Governor Murphy. It allows for the recreational use of marijuana for adults 21 years of age and older and requires that each municipality develop regulations concerning the location, type and number of cannabis businesses in the community, hours of operation, consumption areas within a business and regular inspections for compliance.

Two (2) parts of this legislation make it particularly appealing to Orange residents AND to the City of Orange Township:

REGULATIONS AND REVENUE:

1. Regulations adopted and enforced by both the municipality and the state minimize the risk of any harm to the community and make this emerging industry safe and beneficial to consumers.
2. Unlike most other taxes imposed on businesses in New Jersey, the Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization Act provides for a 2% sales tax on retailers, cultivators and manufacturers and a 1% sales tax on wholesalers **paid directly to the municipality.**

Revenue from a regulated cannabis industry in Orange can off-set the cost for services and reduce the tax burden on residents: Improving recreation programs and their facilities, building a new library, creating job training programs, improving services and facilities for seniors are all possible with this new emerging revenue source. To take a "wait and see" approach means a missed opportunity as other municipalities in the area will very quickly fill the void and be able to serve the needs of Orange residents.

The HUUB, Inc. urges every member of the City Council to VOTE AGAINST ORDINANCE NO. 14-2021 and support a bright future for the City of Orange Township!

Sheena Alabado
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I support allowing cannabis business in Orange, NJ. There are two main reason why: 1) Potential tax revenue from business and 2) Better regulation of cannabis.

The tax revenue from these businesses can potentially lower property taxes. Many of the families here in Orange live in apartments with ever increasing rent. I am hoping that lower property taxes will also lower the rent that so many families here are having trouble especially during this pandemic. Even then, the city can just rake in money from these taxes. Second point is that weed is already rampant in Orange. Rather than banning it, regulating where weed comes from like having liquor stores, can help people be more responsible. It's also just easier to control with if you have started regulating it. Therefore, there really is just more benefits allowing it in the city.

Edilson Guzman

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Banning Cannabis business in Orange will be a loss against the legalization of marijuana in New Jersey. 81% of cannabis business owners are white and only 4.3% Black. But black people are 264% MORE likely than white people to be arrested for cannabis possession. Orange's demographic is predominantly minorities. It is our job as a small town to make a change now, banning cannabis business will only take us a step backwards. Giving the opportunity to a resident from Orange to open up a Local Dispensary will only give us that step forward. We will be creating change for our community for the better. Not only will you be supporting our citizens to make a change against the statistic, we will be able to obtain a new tax source for our city. Orange will be able to impose a 2.00% sales tax on retailers, cultivators, and manufacturers. This new tax source will be beneficial to our city as it can help the city grow and prosper even more!