

Good morning and welcome everyone. I'm Tremaine Wright, chair of the Cannabis Control Board and it's great to be here with everyone today. Recognizing that we have a majority of the board members present, I'm pleased to call

to order another meeting of the Cannabis Control Board and to welcome all of you who are participating in person or via livestream.

At this time I'd like to note that board member Gilbert Jenkins is participating from a public location at Sony Morrisville and additionally board member Adam Perry is joining remotely from a private location due to extraordinary circumstances.

As always, this meeting will be recorded and the transcript will be available to the public on the Office of Cannabis Management's website, [Cannabis.ny.gov](https://www.cannabis.ny.gov). Additional information on Cannabis Control Board meetings is also available on the site.

Today's agenda will include some brief remarks from myself. Then we'll move on to review and approval of the meeting minutes from the Cannabis Control Board meeting that was held on July 19th. Then we'll have consideration of revised adult use cannabis regulations, consideration of the adult use cannabis license applications,

consideration of the expanded registered organization application, consideration of the cannabis research license application, consideration of a cannabis laboratory testing permit, consideration of a

registered organization's change in ownership request, and then a report from our Office of Cannabis Management's Executive Director Chris Alexander.

Thereafter we'll move to public comment on the items considered during today's board meeting.

We'll have an Executive Session and then the board will adjourn.

As I just noted, we have a heavy agenda today and I'm pleased that today the Cannabis Control Board will consider the final adult use regulations which will bridge New York's existing programs into general licensing. We are quite aware that there are eager applicants for all license types who have patiently waited as we consider the significant outpouring of comments from the public regarding these regulations.

We appreciate all of you that have taken time to submit comments for our review.

On behalf of the board and the office, we're excited to introduce to the public this next chapter of licensed cannabis industry in New York State.

If approved today, these regulations will lay the groundwork for a diverse, innovative, and sustainable marketplace in New York State.

Additionally, today we will endeavor to approve the application for cannabis research.

Throughout the years of cannabis prohibition, fear of enforcement, stymied research, and innovation, today we have an opportunity to encourage discovery, invention, and the practice of developing and introducing new ways of utilizing cannabis.

The adult use applications, research opportunities, and adult use regulations to be considered today are designed to usher in New York's sustainable, equitable, legal cannabis market. So without further ado, let's move on to the first item of today's agenda.

Our first order of business will be the review and approval of the meeting minutes from the July 19th Cannabis Control Board meeting.

May I please have a motion to consider and approve the July 19th, 2023 Board meeting minutes? So moved.

So I'll take, may I ask you to second since we have a motion here?

Did he hear me? Or can I ask you to take a second? Okay, thank you. So we have a motion and a second.

Is there any discussion?

Okay.

Hearing none, I'll call for a vote. All in favor?

Aye.

Aye.

I see your mouth moving, but I don't think we hear you, Jen. Oh, sorry, aye. Okay, perfect.

Thank you. The motion to approve the July 19th, 2023 Board meeting minutes carries.

As mentioned previously, the adult use cannabis regulations are up as an agenda item today.

May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2023-32, a resolution to consider revised adult use regulations?

So moved.

Second. And I have a second. Thank you. I would like to ask Chief of Staff and Senior Policy Director Axel Barnaby to provide a brief overview of these regulations. Thank you.

Members, we are extraordinarily happy and proud to present the final package for your approval that we've been discussing now for just under a year. We originally had this package due on November 21st of last year, and the team inside, the team inside OCM has been working on this package for longer than that, and some of us have been working on this package for many years before that as well.

I think you said it right, Madam Chair, that this is going to be the most comprehensive set of regulations in the country, if not in the world.

We've tackled a lot of the shortcomings we've seen in other states when it comes to ensuring that small and medium-sized businesses are able to thrive, and that competition remains fair in the market.

Originally when we filed this for public comment, we had about 3,500 comments, so we had a lot of people with a lot of thoughts, and we incorporated, I think, a good share of those in our revised package that went out in June, on June 14th, and since then, with the closing of the regulations in July, we had another 450 comments that we looked at. There's been a robust public comment period on this, but as we've said many times before, this is a living document. We're all standing up in industry, and it evolves over time, and as new information comes out and as facts develop on the ground, we will make amendments to regulations. This is not a static document, and we will be back to the board with more amendments as they become due, but it is a place to start, and it is an important piece of the backbone of the blueprint.

I think because of the momentous nature of this package, we would like to take a minute just to call out some of the folks that have worked on this. I think it was an agency-wide effort, but there were really three groups in the agency that really drove this. There was the policy shop, there was the equity team, and there was the legal office, and they really took the laboring ore. So folks, I can't name everybody, but Damien and Tabitha out of equity, and in the policy team, John and Ben and Maggie, in the legal team, Linda and Patricia and Diana and Blaise, everybody has just been working so hard on these, and I think we're all incredibly proud, and I know there are some things that may still need to be fixed, but we're very eager to have you consider this. By way of example on what this means for our market, we thought we'd use a very short anecdote of Florida as an example to New York. It's a comparably sized market, 20 million people. They have a different approach to vertical integration and to the number of licenses that they're going to allow in their market. They have 23 licensees, and the top five licensees in that market account for 70% of the licenses. So five people have 70% of the licenses, cultivation and retail. One licensee has over 120 dispensaries.

So New York chose to do something different.

New York chose to have a two-tier market to break up those licenses, to limit the amount of licenses one person can control and own, but that means a lot of regulation around how you define control, a lot of business rules, and while we think most small businesses are going to be able to navigate those fairly easily, they did take quite a few pages to write. So in short, this package would, if adopted, would bring us to almost 700 pages of regulation. We would have everything set from labs to enforcement, and in this package we would have the social equity provisions, the licensing provisions. We would have our business rules, our operating rules. There is a lot here, and we really appreciate the time that the board has taken to give us feedback, to work with us on this, and to now finally consider this as a package. So with no further ado, we are more than happy to answer any questions the board has and look forward to moving along on this front. Thank you. Thank you. Are there any questions or discussion from the board members?

Okay, hearing none, I'll call for the vote. Dr. Gilbert Jenkins?

Aye. Ms. Garcia? Aye. Mr. Perry?

Aye. Ms. Knight? Aye. And I vote on the affirmative as well. The motion to approve the resolution number 2023-32, a resolution to consider revised adult use regulations carries.

So next.

And now next we'll consider how licensing opportunities will become available to the public that has been eagerly waiting to enter this burgeoning market. So may I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2023-33, resolution to approve adult use cannabis applications?

So moved. I have a second. Second.

I'll ask our Executive Director Chris Alexander to provide a brief overview of the adult use cannabis applications before the board. Thanks.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, board members, and to all those in attendance, we appreciate your commitment to this mission. As we forecast at the last board meeting, the adult use revised regulations were brought to the board at this September meeting.

And now, as also forecast, the applications for the cultivator process to distribute our micro business and retail dispensary license types will be available on New York Business Express shortly thereafter. And we are pleased to officially open the application window as early as October 4th, 2023, if this application is approved today by the board.

Additionally, the office will be making available forms allowing compliant registered organizations to transition into the adult use market.

Options for additional license types will follow soon thereafter.

Adult use conditional cultivator, AUCC, and processor licenses in good standing with the office will be able to apply to transition to non-conditioned licenses through an application on the NYPD BE portal once the application is open. We're encouraging our conditional licensees to start this process early to ensure they're able to transition to full licenses before the conditional licenses expire in June of 2024.

The office anticipates a lot of excitement and interest in these applications, and we are committed to providing as much information as possible regarding what an applicant will need to prepare in order to apply. So please be on the lookout for guidance and FAQs from the office that will drop on our website in the next few days.

The office anticipates a lot of excitement--I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our agency partners at ITS for their help and assistance designing and building a cannabis license application system.

Again, the plan date for the launch for the public's information as well as for the board's information is October 4th. The application window for the applications will be open for 60 days for interested applicants to apply.

To fast track a subset of retail dispensary licensees for applying with the location already secured, OCM will be reviewing submissions that apply with the location after 30 days, but the general retail dispensary application will remain open for the full 60.

We extended the application window 60 days to ensure interested applicants had sufficient time to gather the required materials for the application.

Applications are broken into four major sections. The first section captures general information about the applicant applying. This includes their profile information, primary contacts, mailing, and information about the business entity.

Please make sure to apply with the business entity that will ultimately be holding the license.

The second section of the application deals with the license type, specific questions and eligibility, for example, what tier or cultivation method you're applying for, what type of process or license, whether it be extraction or manufacturing, et cetera.

I'll now hand it over to Damien, our chief equity officer, to talk about the social and economic equity certification.

Thank you, Chris.

Good afternoon, everyone.

Good morning. Sorry.

All adult use cannabis license applicants will have the opportunity to apply for social and economic equity certification in one of the following paths. They must come from a community that's disproportionately impacted, which I'll speak about shortly, be a woman-owned business, minority-owned business, a service-stable veteran-owned business, or a distressed farmer.

Applicants who would like to become C certified must provide documentation that they qualify as one of the above categories. The office is preparing guidance documents that will be on our website this week outlining the documents that will be required for each type of social and economic equity.

As stated in the cannabis law, there's a goal of awarding 50% of adult use cannabis licenses to C applicants. C prioritization for adult use cannabis licenses will be afforded to applicants qualifying as extra priority, individuals from a CDI, distressed farmers, and service-stable veterans. The office is unable to extend the same prioritization as C groups qualifying on the basis of gender or race.

However, all applicants that qualify C will receive 50% reduction in application and license fees and be eligible for application assistance and technical training in the office's Cannabis Hub and Incubation Program that I will cover later in the meeting.

Go to the next slide.

The True Party of Interest section is the final section of the application.

The TPI framework is intended to protect the integrity of the two-tier cannabis market and establish monitoring and enforcement procedures for the vertical and horizontal ownership restrictions.

TPI identifies persons and entities with direct or indirect interest in a license. It establishes effective procedures for tracking and confirming compliance with the cannabis law's ownership restrictions and is essential to creating a level playing field that is fair and equitable.

Applicants for cannabis licenses will be required to provide contact information for their TPI as each TPI is required to submit a personal or entity history disclosure form through a secure TPI portal.

This information will be used to ensure that the cannabis licensee and everyone with the financial or controlling interest in that licensee adheres to the requirements of the cannabis law relating to ownership and the enforcement of the two-tier system, which is the bedrock of the small business cannabis ecosystem envisioned in the cannabis law.

Among other items, TPI, both individuals and entities, will be asked to submit the following information, basic identifying details and contact information, any previous convictions, sanctions, litigation, or similar. Any other cannabis license affiliations, all goods and service agreements that TPI has.

The adult use regulations authorize the office and the board to take various actions such as suspending, canceling, or revoking a license, debarring a person from licensure, or denying license renewal or changes when a licensee or its true parties of interest directly or indirectly failed to comply with ownership or interest rules.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I'm happy to answer any questions the board may have. Thank you. Is there any discussion, questions, or comments by any board members?

Just to be clear, so we have all of the cultivation, all of the processing, and all of the distribution licenses ready to launch?

The applications, yes. We'll be ready on October 4th. Okay. Inclusive of small. Yep.

Okay.

There are no other questions. I'll call for the vote.

Dr. Gilbert Jenkins?

Aye. Ms. Garcia? Aye. Ms. DePeri? Aye. Ms. Knight? Aye. And I vote in affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution 2023-33, the resolution to approve adult use cannabis applications carries.

The next order of business addresses the application for the expansion of the pool of registered organizations.

May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2023-34, I'm going to say that all over.

Resolution number 2023-34, a resolution to approve the expanded registered organization application.

So moved. May I have a second?

Second. Thank you. I'll now ask Tabitha Robinson, the director for economic development, policy and research to provide a brief overview of the expanded registered organization application.

Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning, all. We are pleased to announce the release of the application for registered organizations.

This application will allow us to evaluate and select additional medical cannabis businesses in New York State. This is the first opportunity to apply for registration since the Department of Health opened the application in 2015.

And since that time, the medical cannabis market in New York State has expanded significantly. Firstly, we have increased patient access and product diversity and authorized medical home grow. We have expanded both the list of qualifying conditions for patients and the types of practitioners who can certify them.

Secondly, a new law is in effect. The compassionate care act was superseded by the marijuana regulation and taxation act, the MRTA, and the MRTA demands that we proceed with New York's medical cannabis program differently. It embeds equity not only into the adult use market but also into the medical market. The importance of health equity is at the center of this application.

The selection procedure places a premium on serving the public interest. And the MRTA states that granting a registration must be in the public interest. So we have incorporated this requirement into the application.

Applicants can demonstrate their ability and capacity to serve the public interest in numerous ways, for example, by demonstrating the cultural, linguistic, and medical competence, by providing affordable products for all patients, by respecting their workers, by choosing locations around the state so that patients can access their medicine, by protecting environmental sustainability, and by meeting diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. As we review the application, we are not only interested in the applicant's plans for the future but also in their prior experience. Who are the company's owners and what do they bring to the table for New York's patient population?

The objective is to identify medical practitioners who are rooted in the communities they serve and dedicated to patient care. The office encourages diverse applicants who can quickly operationalize to apply for registration.

Applicants must consider the extent to which they reflect the demographics of the state.

The application fee for medical operators is \$10,000 and the registration fee is \$200,000 payable upon registration approval. The application will be accessible in PDF format following this meeting. And interested applicants may begin preparing their submissions and can send questions to the office. The office will post responses to these questions on an FAQ page available on our website.

Finally, the application portal will be opening in October. The office will be sharing more details soon.

We look forward to improving our medical market with diverse operators who are truly committed to their patients and understand health equity. Thank you and I'm happy to answer any questions the board may have.

Thank you, Tabitha. Is there any discussion, questions or comments?

I've got three. Yes.

Okay.

First, if the RO's that are currently in the state are allowed to also enter into the adult use market, do we have an estimate of how much of their canopy is going to be increased to go to that market? So while this has been planned for all along and we know that the RO's we're going to enter into our adult use side, it would be really helpful, I think, for our growers to have some clarity on what that competition actually looks like. So we know that they can't divert any of the product that's already going into the medical market into the adult market, but do we have an estimate of just how much product we expect them to bring into the adult use side? So that's question one and I'll let someone respond to that.

Yeah. Thank you, board member Gilbert Jenkins. I just want to clarify. So the existing registered organizations that are able to transition, there's no increase in their canopy allotment.

And so they each have, I believe, about 100,000 square feet. They're not operating at that level currently, but that's how much has been previously allocated to them. As they transition over time, that will be their canopy. This resolution related to additional registered organizations, they will be at that same canopy, but we don't anticipate this canopy coming online for at least two years.

So it's, I think, the existing analysis related to the RO's that are currently operating in the medical market who would be able to transition shortly into the adult use market is really kind of depressed by the fact that they have not yet themselves all built out to that size of operation that they were previously allotted, but that they didn't build out to just due to the size of the medical market.

But do we have an estimate of what percentage of their canopy they're currently using and therefore how much more they'll be able to grow?

We do have estimates on an individual basis, I think, based on knowledge of their operations, but for the estimate that we have for the transition now, it's kind of fluctuating due to the fact that we don't know exactly when they will all complete their build outs to transition over. We do know that with that, the 100,000 that they currently have, we are anticipating at least by next year that we would average.

I'll get that number to you. Just give me a few minutes. No, that's fine. And I think that not even just to me, I think that for the growers in the industry, it would be really helpful for them to be able to plan and prepare to have a better concept of what that is going to look like.

So my second question goes along with that, with the new applicants that are going to come in, what is the split between the medical side of their canopy and the adult use? So they're allowed to have this large total canopy. Are we mandating how much of that has to go into the medical side? On the producer side, or on the cultivation side, we do have requirements that they continue to supply the medical market itself. So while it's not set at a particular square footage, it is based on previous year's patient activity. And so there's provisions in the law and in the regulations that require them to maintain product access and supply and prioritization. That's for the current ones. I mean for the new ones.

For the new ones, the same rules will apply. Right, but so the new ones aren't in the space yet. Exactly. They're not supplying the medical market yet. So are we saying 10% of your yield goes to medical and 90% can go to adult use? Or are we saying it has to be 50-50? Is there any provision in there for the split medical to adult use? I don't believe it's a set percentage of their canopy as they come in. Then it's based on the size of the medical market as they come in to the medical market. And just to be clear, this will be that allocation of the 100,000 is to supply both medical demands and the adult use demands that may come of them. But at the onset, these folks are medical operators.

And so that 100,000 will be focused on the medical side should they develop their cultivation first.

Okay, I think that it's going to be important for us to actually look at that in a little bit more detail because as the growers are planning, again, this could be a tremendous amount of biomass that's ending up in the adult use size. Or if the medical market expands, maybe it's not. Maybe it's not as much that's going to end up in our adult use dispensaries. And so I think having a little bit more clarity on that would be really helpful.

And then third, with all of this increased in indoor canopy, there's going to be demand from growers to have more indoor licenses allowed on the existing side and for our new folks who aren't ROs. And we've had such a strong push for sustainability.

When we talk about sustainability, we're generally talking about energy so far, right? We're looking at lights. Sometimes we're talking about water use. And there's another piece in the mix that I would like us to discuss more often. I would like us to talk about with this increased use of indoor grow spaces, that means that plants are being grown in media. Peat-based media is the traditional media source and is the most unsustainable product out there. And so if we're looking at indoor grows, I want us to more holistically look at sustainability and look at ways where we can see opportunities to promote more outdoors on grown because I think that that is going to be in direct opposition to the movement of licenses.

So that's more of a comment and less of a question. I thank you for that. And I just want to reiterate that we are incredibly proud of having our first crop grown almost entirely outside. And the quality work done by the conditional cultivators and processors definitely, I think, changed the game for licensing cultivation across the country and recognizing that you can grow outside and develop quality products. And so we're absolutely tuned in to make sure that the additional canopy that we authorize for indoor cultivation has limited of a harmful environmental footprint. And so I think the regulations, they do track waste management, water treatment, et cetera, to make sure that we're at least keeping identifying baselines for production inside. But I mean, it's definitely going to be a continuing work of the office.

And that's why the offering of additional outdoor mixed use licenses to encourage that activity, particularly for the environmental reasons, but also just calls to build out, et cetera, is really important. I do just want to come back to the canopy discussion and just let you know that we'll follow up right after this with some clarity on that. I apologize if I misunderstood some of your questions. Great. Thank you. I also want to respond to your concerns about environmental sustainability. These additional RO's who will be coming on board as part of their application, they do have a very robust environmental plan that lays out a number of criteria they have to meet in order to be awarded a license, a registration. And that covers everything from pollutants to water usage to energy use. There's a very robust criteria. So we are very much considering the ways in which we are continuing to protect the environment as part of the public interest requirement. No, I appreciate that. And I thank you. I think that the requirements that are in there look good, except media is not addressed at all. Grow media is not considered at all. So that's something that I think is important to look at. Thank you for that feedback.

I just want to make it clear, so I'm going to ask the question. We are discussing the new entrance into the marketplace. This application is not what will be utilized to authorize any existing RO's to roll into adult use. Can you explain and or just elaborate or confirm? That's correct. The statute mandates the OCM and the Canvas Control Board to expand the registered organization license class.

And so that's what this item is related to. The submissions related to the existing registered organization's transition into the adult use market is not through this application. That will be through document submissions that will be done over time.

Any other questions?

So I'm sorry. You said document submissions, not an application? No, it's not an application. It's more of a collection of their operations, et cetera, ownership, et cetera, to ensure compliance and checks on their facilities before they can transition over.

Okay.

Any other questions, comments?

Hearing none, I'll call for the vote. Dr. Gilbert Jenkins?

Aye.

Ms. Garcia? Aye. Mr. Perry? Aye. Ms. Knight? Aye. I'll vote in affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution number 2023-24, a resolution to approve the expanded registered organization application carries.

Concerning the next order of business, may I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2023-35, a resolution to approve the Cannabis Research License application.

Okay. I'll move to the next order. And may I have a second? Second. And I'll ask Dr. Nikisha Abel to provide a brief overview of the Cannabis Research License application.

Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning, everyone. Good morning. It gives me great pleasure to announce the opening of the Cannabis Research License application.

With this license, New York State has the opportunity to lead the nation in cannabis research, an area that has been slow to progress due to administrative barriers and federal restrictions.

Scientists, physicians, cultivators, and others will now have the opportunity to study real-world cannabis products and provide the evidence needed to better understand the vast potential of the cannabis plant. The office encourages interested individuals to review the regulations and application requirements.

Some of those requirements include but are not limited to a description of the research and study design, justification for the amount and type of cannabis needed, a plan for securing the cannabis, and evidence that researchers have the appropriate expertise needed to conduct the study.

As approved today, the license application will be available on the OCM webpage beginning tomorrow and accepted on a rolling basis.

We look forward to opening the Cannabis Research License application and seeing the innovative studies that researchers will bring. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you.

Is there any discussion, questions, or comments by any board members?

I just want to say this is really exciting and I'm so happy that this is before us now. Absolutely. All right.

There are no other comments. I'll call for the vote. Dr. Gilbert Jenkins?

Aye. Ms. Garcia? Aye. Mr. Perry? Aye. Ms. Knight? Aye. And I vote in the affirmative as well. The motion to approve number 2023-35 resolution to approve the Cannabis Research License carries.

The next order of business pertains to a new Cannabis Laboratory Testing Permit. May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2023-36 resolution approving Cannabis Laboratory Testing Permit? So moved. May I have a second? Second.

This resolution seeks to approve a Cannabis Laboratory Testing Permit for dope diagnostics lab in Pearl River, New York. Approval of this lab permit would bring the total number of Cannabis Testing Labs in the state to 16.

By continuing to approve additional testing laboratories across the state we hope that we're able to ensure sufficient lab testing capacity to meet the current and the expanding needs of our state. Is there any questions or discussion or comments related to this application?

I'm sorry.

Gebra Jenkins, did you have one?

No I was just reviewing what was on the slide. That's all. Okay.

Okay. Hearing no comments, I will call for the vote. Dr. Gebra Jenkins?

Sorry.

Sorry.

I guess I did have a question. I'm sorry.

Were there two lab permits that were in front of us?

There are two. This is just the first. This is the first. Okay. So I was just trying to distinguish between the two of them. But okay.

So I can vote on this one?

Yes ma'am. I am sorry. I am sorry. Okay. I am sorry. I am sorry. Okay. I have two. I'm sorry. That's okay. Okay. Okay. Can we move on to the next order of business. Please state aye.

Ms. Garcia? Aye. Ms. DeParri? Aye. Ms. Knight? Aye. I will vote in the affirmative as well. So the motion to approve resolution number 2023-36, a resolution approving the candidates laboratory permit carries.

The next order of business is a second cannabis laboratory permit for our review.

Resolution number 2023-37, a resolution denying cannabis laboratory testing permit. So moved. We have a motion. We have a second. Second. We have a second. So this resolution seeks to deny the cannabis laboratory testing permit for Calix Laboratories in Pearl River, New York. OCM has completed the review of and recommends the denial of this applicant for cannabis testing laboratory permit.

Is there any discussion, question or comments by any board member?

I'll call for a vote. Dr. Gilbert Jenkins?

Aye. Ms. Garcia? Aye. Mr. Perry? Aye. Ms. Knight? Aye. And I vote on the affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution number 2023-37, a resolution denying cannabis laboratory testing permit carries.

Concerning the next order of business, this will close out the resolutions for today's meeting.

May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2023-38, a resolution to approve certain ownership changes for ETane LLC.

We have a motion.

So moved. We have a second. Second. However, before we begin the discussion, are there any board members that plan to recuse themselves from the discussion and vote?

Madam Chair, I'm going to recuse myself to avoid the presumption of impropriety in this. Thank you. So we acknowledge that recusal and we'll just wait for her to be able to exit the room.

Pursuant to the medical cannabis regulations, the boards must approve a change in composition of a registered organization.

In this case, a director of a parent company to the registered organization ETane LLC has resigned from their position on the board of managers. The parent company is seeking to redeem the membership interest of the resigning director, thereby making the remaining director 100% owner. And they will thereafter add or they have already added two new board members to its board of managers.

OCM has completed its review of the change in composition and all required filings by ETane and recommends approval of the request.

Is there any discussion, question or comment by any board member?

Okay.

The motion to approve. Oh, sorry. Hearing none, I'll call for the vote. Dr. Gibber Jenkins?

Aye.

Mr. Perry?

Aye. It's Dane.

Ms. Knight? Aye.

And I'm going to add a comment before my vote here. I am concerned that we don't have a more streamlined process in place at this moment in order to bring these kinds of concerns before the board. And I look forward to the implementation of something that's going to allow us to actually address this in real time. Because I think that we are coming in after the fact and we need to get ahead of these types of concerns.

And I don't think it's going to be fair to the other market players. But with that said, I will vote in favor of this resolution. And thereby the motion to approve resolution number 2023-38, a resolution approving cannabis laboratory testing permit carries.

So that was the final resolution for consideration today. Next we're going to hear an update on the Office of Cannabis Management from our Executive Director, Chris Alexander. Chris?

Thank you, Madam Chair and board members.

I know that today is a day of mixed emotions for many who are excited to see the market launch. They're excited of the steps that have been taken to roll out general licensing and really take the next step here for New York's cannabis market.

I acknowledge our licensees who are currently working diligently to get open. And I just want to express on behalf of the Office the continued commitment to the success of those licensees.

We will continue to work diligently.

We will continue to work diligently to realize the seeding opportunity initiative and what it represented for New York to take that necessary step of starting a market in a way that nobody else had with those who had been most impacted with our small farmers. I know we'll hear a lot from you all today, but I wanted to make sure that first that you understand where we sit in this process.

And our commitment has not wavered, and it will not.

A lot of OCM staff have worked tirelessly on this reg package, on these applications.

This is not a thing that happens easily.

There's quite a bit that has gone into it, and so I just want to again acknowledge the teams that have worked to develop the regulations and of course the board for their expertise and their input and their action today to advance those regulations. It allows us to do and continue to do what has not yet been done in creating additional opportunities for small businesses to thrive here in New York's cannabis market. Focusing of course on access to retail, cultivation, and branding opportunities that I think are really significant in the future of the cannabis market globally.

As acknowledged, there are additional items that will continue to fine tune as it relates to the regulations. We look forward to bringing the board a subsequent regulatory package to identify items that we've seen so far could be better expressed or clarified and items that have been highlighted of course through public comment that need to be fine tuned.

So we'll continue that work.

But before I hand it over to staff to go through several updates, just again I want to acknowledge

where we are right now as we expand access to research, as we are the first state program,

the first state to take on cannabis research in a really intentional way to ensure that we're creating more access and we're learning about all that the cannabis plan has to offer us. As we roll out licensing, the same commitment that we had related to CARDS, going around the state and making sure folks are prepared for the opportunity will continue. You'll hear a little bit more about that from the team. But

just as we start that work, I just want to say the same thing I said to many of you who are CARDS licensees as we're rolling out that program. And this is not, and that is that this is another opportunity that we don't want people to miss because they did not know. And so your efforts to spread the word about what's going on here and the opportunities that we're creating is incredibly important. I expect everybody who cares about New York cannabis to be an ambassador for this program that really is breaking the mold.

Mostly on our enforcement efforts, we have continued to do the heavy work of transitioning folks both through direct enforcement action and through massive public education campaigns to transition folks to the legal market to ensure that the product that is being grown by our cultivators and sold at retail as the right size audience and to make sure that New York's consumers are not consuming anything that could harm them. And so that work goes on and we'll have a more comprehensive update on enforcement at the next board meeting. I'll now pass it over to John, our Director of Policy to kick us off with a market update.

Thank you, Chris. Thank you all for being here. Thank you to the board. And I couldn't more vigorously kind of support Chris's gratitude to all of the stakeholders in this market who are working so hard to build what I think is going to be the world's most consequential cannabis market.

Since we last met, we've added two additional dispensaries, one in O'Nee-Onter and the other in DePew.

So we now have a total of 23 retail dispensaries open across the state. And Momentum has only continued to build as consumers are coming into our legal stores

and purchasing our locally produced products.

However, as you all know, the injunction is currently preventing the office from processing more card licenses, thereby limiting our ability to expand retail access to consumers in the state.

We look forward to this litigation being resolved so that we can resume the urgent work of building the market to serve the hundreds of thousands of consumers across the state who are interested in buying legal regulated cannabis but have nowhere to do so.

This summer has shown us a scale of demand that lies ahead in the state of New York, with sales rising to nearly \$17 million in July and to nearly \$18 million in the first just three weeks of August.

So year to date, we've sold nearly \$66 million worth of cannabis.

And worth noting that in the last two months, including just the first three weeks of August, we sold more cannabis than we did in the first six months of the year.

A reflection of the momentum that is building as consumers are coming into our stores and gaining access to a very rich diversity of products.

It's also worth noting that this impressive jump that we have seen in our retail sell-through has happened while we have seen several of our retailers close for renovations, including Smackton Days in Manhattan and Good Grades in Queens.

So as I will continue to say, we look forward to continuing to open more retail dispensaries and to opening up the full retail market with applications that are going to be opening up in October, including to micro licenses over the next month.

Our early performance thus far makes it clear that demand is not the issue in this market. Retail access is.

And we think that there's going to be very, very strong performance for the retail ecosystem as we continue to open up more stores.

Even as we work toward the implementation of our C2Sale system, which will greatly enhance our ability to analyze the data that's starting to flow through our reports, we thought that it was worth providing at least a snapshot of just one week of sales to illustrate how much volume was moving through the system and how much product we're getting sold.

So in the week of August 20th through the 26th, we sold approximately 100,000 units of cannabis products.

As we've seen consistently since this market launched, nearly half of the product sold as flowers with vapes making up about a quarter of those products and edibles making up 16%.

We also wanted to show this slide because I think it really underscores the urgency of retail access as we consider the role that retail plays in helping our growers sell through their excess inventory. During just this week, between the 20th and the 26th, we sold 50,000 units of cannabis products totaling nearly \$2 million in revenue.

We recognize and are grateful for the work that our licenses have done to create products that consumers want and to build retail stores that are bringing consumers in from unregulated market and that keep them coming back. This is just the foundation that we are laying for the world's most consequential cannabis market and we look forward to working with all of our licensees, both current and future, to build a truly impactful market.

With that, I'm delighted to hand over to my colleague, Ben Sheridan, who's the Deputy Director of Policy Implementation, to walk us through the Cannabis Grower Showcase Program, an initiative which was approved at our last convening and which has gained incredible momentum since.

Before we do, I'd like to express just a personal point of thanks to everyone, the board, our retailers, the growers and processors who have helped make the Grower Showcase Program a reality.

It's proving to be a tremendous opportunity to make legal cannabis products accessible to consumers across the state and we look forward to its continued growth as we look ahead through the end of the year. John, just clarity, your narrative and what was on the slide is not in sync.

Was the weekly unit sold 100,000 or 50,000? Was it 4,000?

On the chart on the slide, it's roughly 100,000 individual units, \$4 million total, but 2 million of flower products. About half of that product was of cannabis flower, which is just underscoring that as we're trying to work through our excess inventory, selling that flower through is critically important through our stores. Thank you for clarifying. Sure.

I am not John Cuggia. Hi, Ben Sheridan. Really nice to be here today. Thank you, board chair, Chris, for the opportunity to talk to the Cannabis Grower Showcase Program,

which was announced at our most recent board meeting. To date, we've received a number of applications and approved 22 Cannabis Grower Showcases. As you can see on the map, they have significantly expanded retail access in the state of New York to people in the areas not previously served by retail dispensaries. It's the first in the nation program, which we are extremely proud of. And from Brooklyn to Batavia, we've just seen incredible collaboration at the local level from our supply chain and from New Yorkers coming out to support what we're doing here and what you're all doing here. So it

really comes from the bottom of our hearts that we say thank you for making this program a success. Next slide, please.

As I said, we've had 22 Cannabis Grower Showcases and it tells a bigger story. We have over 70 conditional cultivators who have participated in this program. We have 19 processors, about half of our processor licenses, and 15 carts so well over half of the card community has participated in the Cannabis Grower Showcase program.

This program isn't only connecting our suppliers in a unique way, but in a way really rarely done across the country. It's connecting our suppliers to the communities they serve.

In most states, consumers don't meet the people who grew their product. In New York, we've taken a decidedly different approach these last few months.

[applause]

Our first Cannabis Grower Showcase took place in New Paltz in mid-August and there was a lot of moving pieces to make this happen, but it's in the municipal parking lot and it really set a tempo for how municipal governments could continue to engage with what we're doing here. This slide really says not at all, but captures some of the excitement you can see and the way that local press is talking about this. There's so much pent-up energy and ahead of the more robust licensing rollout that we are expecting in the next month or two, it just shows the ground swell of support. Despite whatever you might be hearing in the news, New Yorkers want this in their communities. They're excited about it from

government to everyday consumers like us. I want to go on to the next slide here and just talk about the economic impact. Let me just be super clear. These are not and were never considered a replacement for retail dispensaries. We need retail dispensaries in New York. However, this is an important step over a time where a dispensary rollout has been hindered to continue to allow product to move to market.

As of last week, we were averaging about \$10,000 per day of CGS sales with about 50 days of sales slightly over that.

This program though has the power to grow exponentially. By the end of September, we have 250 sales days across the state of New York and we're looking at over 1200 sales days by the end of the year with a number of applications sitting at the office and active review. That number is going to continue to grow. We expect sales to double in September at least hitting that \$2.5 to \$3 million run rate and by the end of the year at the current run rate, we're looking at over a \$12 million program. But again, we sit here with a ton of optimism that that number is actually going to continue to grow.

I also just want to point that as this program continues to mature and we learn more about it, we have guidance that we continue to refine and develop. And more long term though this program sunsets at the end of the year, today's regulations package include language and a program for cannabis events and this is really an incredible learning opportunity for the office and rolling out cannabis events over the next 6 to 12 months. I will add that because of some of the stipulations, these sales numbers are actually depressed. Folks who have been to a cannabis grower showcase, folks who work at cannabis grower showcases know that. We have a 50% price cap on our flower sales and that's 60% of sales taking place at cannabis grower showcases. So you can do a little bit of back and napkin math to realize that that 12 million number is actually artificially lower than if these sales have been taking place at a retail dispensary.

But we do understand that this is a learning process and we're incredibly grateful for the stakeholders who have been willing to tell us how to make this program better and continuously improve, which is really a mantra over at the agency.

I do want to just say thank you one more time here and appreciate everybody for listening to the update. I believe next I'm turning it over to the Chief Equity Officer, Damian Fagan.

Thank you, Ben.

And thank you to the farmers and conditional retailers for really committing to the grower showcases.

These events are inspiration for a lot of other initiatives we plan to roll out in the coming years.

New Yorkers love them, so keep it up.

I'd like to move on to an overview of a number of new initiatives from the office that will aid in achieving access for C applicants and ensure their success is licensees. These initiatives will fall under the Cannabis Hub and Incubator Program CHIP.

First, the office is establishing a robust statewide support system dedicated to providing C applicants with hands-on technical guidance and mentorship throughout the licensure application phase this fall. The office will conduct a week of comprehensive training sessions during the last week of September to ensure this mentorship network of community-based organizations, nonprofits, and law firms all have the information and resources they need to support C applicants and disseminate that information across the state.

A planned request for assistance will facilitate future grant funding for these efforts.

I want to note here that the adult use application approved by the board today is without question one of the most accessible in the nation.

There are no burdensome SOPs or business plans needed to evaluate and score. We anticipate that the majority of the support required will involve assisting extra priority and CDI applicants in gathering the required documentation for their C certification and in understanding, for example, the distinctions between provisional and full licensure.

Next, the office will host training sessions in November to assist farmers with the AUCC transition. These sessions will cover technical concerns around GMP requirements, distressed farmer certification, minimal process requirements, micro business transition. We'll cover it all in multiple webinars to ensure that all the AUCCs have all the information and guidance they need to transition.

After the full license application window is closed and the board has begun reviewing and issuing licenses, the office will be ready to provide comprehensive technical training with tracks and cultivation, processing, retail and distribution.

Brian Farmer and his team will guide licensees through key areas of compliance, operations reporting, testing, financial management practices. We will also be providing standard operating procedure templates and license specific proformas to all licensees.

At the same time, the office will launch a community capital outreach and training initiative to expand New York's ecosystem of local investors. Our team will connect with and train statewide chambers of commerce, regional investment groups, small business development groups, ESG investors, foundations and nonprofits on topics ranging from anticipated micro business ROIs and average retail profit margins to 280 issues and real estate concerns.

By providing accurate and transparent information to both our licensees and the investment community, we can unwind the likelihood for a widespread asymmetries in the space and predatory practices.

With a regulatory framework in place for a small business ecosystem and a talented pool of licensees ready to capitalize on that opportunity, it will be essential to match them with well informed local sources of capital amenable to this mission of impact and shared prosperity.

By next spring, the office anticipates issuing a statewide request for proposals, an RFP, to formalize this work within a network of statewide technical assistance centers and to initiate the next phase of support for licensees as they launch their businesses.

Multiple studies have shown that companies that effectively leverage data to make decisions have greater success and we will have the market data to help our licensees make better decisions on which products to grow, manufacture and sell.

Democratizing access to purchasing patterns, weighted wholesale prices and retail trends will benefit our small business community and consumers alike.

Finally, after all this, we're going to help introduce you, the consumer, to these incredible entrepreneurs, their brands and their stores.

The office anticipates launching a consumer education campaign to tell you more about who they are, how to support their businesses and the social and economic equity label to check for on the product and in the store to support this program.

These initiatives taken together reflect the office's long-term commitment to support those most deserving of this opportunity from application through licensure and an operational business.

Thank you, Chris. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Board members.

[Applause]

Thank you, Damian. Madam Chair, before we close the report, I just wanted to highlight two things.

One, of course, all these development resources have been in development and we are excited to roll them out to you all. I just encourage everybody to stay tapped in with the office. Obviously, if you're here or watching, then you're already signed up for updates with cannabis.ny.gov. But again, please be an ambassador for the program by letting folks know that these resources do exist and they are going to be rolled out across the entirety of the supply chain. The same supports that have been given to our existing retailers through the Accelerator Program will also be made available to additional retail licensees. And of course, the training and development on compliance to our mentors will be available to future licensees. And so I just want to emphasize that.

Before we wrap, this again is a day where we signal or where we put forward work that's been in development for a very long time, years now.

And as we've been doing that work, there's been somebody leading the charge.

He's been my brother through all of this.

And now that we've put forward the regulations to go final, his work is done and it's time to hand it off to the baton and somebody else to continue. I want to thank Axel Burnaby for eight years now, partnership, and the last two here at the helm helping me run and build OCM.

You have been the best champion that we could hope for. Your intellectual prowess, your commitment to always driving forward is appreciated.

The commiseration over the years as we transitioned from roles to role, but still stayed focused on the mission is very much so appreciated.

And what we've built here, the legacy that you live will be protected.

I know members of the team will feel the same way as I do and members of the advocacy community who worked with you will feel the same way. We know the passion comes through and it's here in these regs and this will be really your greatest legacy. So I just want to thank you publicly in front of everybody so that everybody knows really that this project could not have had a better story. So thank you Axel.
[applause] A very emotional moment for me today.

I'm just going to take a minute if I can just to share my thoughts. First I want to thank Chris for those incredibly moving and kind words. This has undoubtedly been the most humbling experience in my professional career. It's been the most challenging, bar none, the most impactful, and the most rewarding project I've ever worked on.

It's also been a privilege to be able to contribute substantially to the vision for an equitable, small business driven market in New York. I think what you said Chris about protecting what we've put together is true.

It's been a radical change in the way we approach drug use in this state and in this country away from criminalization and towards public health and harm reduction.

So I'm eternally grateful for having been able to be a part of this. So thank you.

But Chris knows that this has been a team effort from the beginning.

So I sort of can't leave without at least calling out a couple of the folks that have been involved the whole way. So if you guys humor me for a couple more minutes.

You might not agree with every line in the MRTA and you certainly might not agree with every decision OCM have made, but there have been a lot of people working for a very long time to bring legalization to the state of New York.

And it just wouldn't have happened without them. And so, you know, just a very brief moment down memory lane.

I will always remember Chris says eight years because that's when in almost eight years to the day in September of 2015, when I just joined the governor's office, Chris walked into my office, then working for the Drug Policy Alliance and said, we have to legalize cannabis in the state of New York. And there was just no way that the then governor was going to allow that to happen.

And from that day, you know, Chris has been the quarterback of this team and this effort. Undoubtedly I, you know, I might have contributed in drafting the law, negotiating it through legislature and starting to build the program in the Department of Health and in the bureaucracy before we launched the OCM. But Chris was always pulling the strings. Chris was always setting the direction. And so it's been an honor to work with you and to call you my friend by all means.

But we too stood on the shoulders of giants and we all know who those giants are and what they've done for this movement. And of course, I'm talking about Majority Leader Crystal Peoples Stokes and Liz Kruger.

They and other legislators like Donna Lupardo, who made sure that farmers were represented and wouldn't get hurt in this process.

You know, I've really been at the forefront of this. And then there were the advocates and the policymakers. There was Cassandra Frederick and Melissa Moore.

Nikki Kaitman, Andrew Ross, Jesse Campo Moore. Everybody was working hard before this was a feasible path forward. And there were operators who from the beginning wanted to do this right before 2021 when we

passed the law, people like Vlad Bautista, people, Kaitlyn Cass, that are Alan Gandelman, who's here, I know, that worked hard, Katie Nier, I mean, worked really, really relentlessly to get this over the finish line.

And then there are two people I really want to shout out that in 2018, when we were inside the government and we were trying to recruit people to work on what seemed to be an impossible task with a governor that didn't particularly like cannabis at the time, joined the fray and have been here since.

I almost want to say that this wouldn't have been, it wouldn't happen without Pat McCage and Lila Hunt, who have just tirelessly moved this process along and are still at the agency

working every day to make this happen. We started with a very small team. And the other members of the team were the medical program, which we really built on top of. And at the OCM, there were 15 people, let my Nicole Quackenbush, and they were dedicated and really committed to the medical program. And we remain committed to making sure that patients get the medicine they need. This is still a medicine and we will continue to make sure folks have access.

So then we're at the OCM now. We have over 160 folks. We started with the 15 people in the medical program and now we've grown and there are just too many to name and too many people to applaud. But it was a collective effort and I feel so confident that this program is in the hands of all the right people and that can make sure that it delivers on the promises that we were asked to implement through the legislature. So we're definitely committed.

Where are we now today?

Today we have a number of challenges. We have a number of emergencies. We stopped using the word priorities in the state because we realized that that word almost no longer had any meaning.

It's an absolute top priority for us to destroy the illicit market. It's an absolute priority for us to open the CARD program. It's an absolute priority, top priority for us to secure public health. It's a priority to protect our farmers.

It's a priority to roll out the regulations which we did today thanks to the board.

And it's a priority to build out the OCM. These are all our number one priorities.

It's just relentless and the work that the folks at the OCM do is just amazing.

And so I think because of this maelstrom and this constant pressure, it's important to take stock of moments, milestone moments like today. That's why Chris and I have been talking about this would be an opportunity for me to just say these words and I'm wrapping up so I apologize for making it so long.

But these milestones where the big pieces of the puzzle come together are really important to recognize because we're always just all rushing so fast to get where we're going. And what we've done today is put in place probably the nation's most comprehensive set of regulations, if not the world's most comprehensive set of regulations. We spend a lot of time thinking about these regulations.

And so it's just, yeah, it's been an incredible experience. It's been just such a moving experience. And I think this is as good time as any. There's never any good time to leave. There's never any good time to pass the baton. But when we've done what we've done eight years in the making, I figure it's a good moment to sort of pass this on to a new generation of public leaders that are going to drive this home. And so it's no exaggeration to say that we've had a dozen countries, countries call us for parts of our regulation. They want to understand our program, our small business program, our farmers program, our equity program. We've worked tirelessly with a number of other states with our lesson learned. And

so I look forward to doing more of that work. I will forever be committed to this program. I will be forever here to help. I will never walk away from this program.

And so I want to thank the board. I want to thank Chris. And I want to thank Governor Hochul for really taking a chance on me. And I want to thank all of you for working so hard to make this what we were dreaming it could be. So thank you again.

Well, if I can't ask, I just want to say thank you so much. It's been such a pleasure for me to get to know you, to work with you, to debate with you, to co-create with you, and you'll certainly be missed for sure.

I think most of the board echoes that same sentiment. So thank you. And I want to say thank you to Chris and to all of the team that have made presentations here today. And I guess for our next order of business, we'll be moving on to our public comment period. So members of the public will have an opportunity to address the board. Please remember that we are allowing people no more than two minutes to speak.

And I would like to just let people know that we have over 40 people signed up to speak so that we're looking at a 90-minute segment if you comply with the two-minute window. So as you approach two minutes, you will get a reminder, and we will cut the mic because it's really just not fair to the rest of the people in the room for folks to go beyond there a lot of times.

To begin, the first commentator, Anthony Feliciano.

Chair, before you start, I just want to say that I have a hard stop at 12, and so I mean no disrespect to the public comments that I'm going to miss, and I'll be sure to check up on them afterwards on the recording. Thank you very much. And Madam Chair, I also have the same limitation. Perfect. Thank you. Thank you. I know that there are some people that have to walk out because they have other commitments, everyone. Please try to be concise, speak quickly, and those who are exiting and you have ongoing conversations that I see already beginning, please take them outside the doors so they are respectful to everybody that remains. To begin, Anthony Feliciano. Just as, Madam Chair, thank you. As folks are leaving, before you leave, board members, we just want to make sure again that we, one, express that, you know, members of the board are here to hear you all out. They are doing incredible work. I want to just thank the governor for giving us this opportunity to do this work. I just want to make sure that as we go, people stay on time.

If you are not heard within that time, we will come back to you through the, you can submit your comments online, but we just wanted to make sure that as we start, we do thank the board members for their leave and, of course, the governor for giving us all this opportunity.

My name is Anthony Feliciano. I am Vice President for Advocacy at Housing Works.

On behalf of Housing Works, we are here to support the New York State Card Program. On December 29th, Housing Works became the first legal cannabis dispensary to open under the New York State Card Program. This has enabled us to learn and grow our cannabis operation while raising critical funds for our mission and contributing to the millions in tax revenues that is being generated from other legal dispensaries in New York State. Not-for-profit dispensaries like ours are making meaningful reinvestment to impact the communities. These cannabis proceeds have specifically allowed Housing Works to expand its vocational programs to formerly incarcerated individuals. We have been able to grow our harm reduction programs during an opioid epidemic and have continued our advocacy actions and policies for those affected by the war on drugs and continue being ensnared by the war on drugs.

Housing Works' experience thus far has been positive. We were helped by the support of OCM as well as regulations that allow us to be among the first movers. We won all, all cards to have that same experience.

This is why we do not believe that this can happen if the registered organizations are allowed to enter the market at the same time as the previous license card applicants.

There must be a one-way for the cards to be able to raise capital, find appropriate location, and learn and grow from the early days of the operation. The Nintendo program was this, to ensure that the state's largest cannabis market is not captured by used multi-state operators who will diminish the goals and opportunities of people infected mostly by the war on drugs, particularly black and brown communities.

We find especially galling for these RO's after cutting a deal for early entry has turned around and joined lawsuits designed to freeze the market until they can enter. This can be a lucrative industry, but thus far across the nation, their profits have disproportionately gone to communities not impacted by the war on drugs.

We know New York does not intend to go down that same road. The New York State card program is ambitious and the correct way to approach the creation of equity. New York State should stand by the RMT and establish those strong social economic equity programs. The card program exactly is what we hope you can ensure there is proper time and support for the cards to become established in the market. Thank you, Mr. Feliciano. No, no, no, please. All right. Matthew Robinson.

Matthew Robinson followed by John McDonald.

Good morning, everyone. Good morning. Just want to say thank you to the CCB, the OCM, Governor Hochul, everybody that's been here to make this go down and happen.

Since I've been an owner, I've got to donate to programs in my community. I got to bring kids to a jet game and get them on the field where they met Saws Gardner, young kids that would never have that opportunity.

I've got to donate to so many different things. This cannot stop. The OCM do not stop. Keep going. You got my full support and everybody at Essential Flowers, full support, 100%. The MSOs that are doing what they're doing, they're doing out of spite. They're not trying to do anything to help. They're just trying to fill their coffers and stock their pockets to make more money, to take to wherever they live, but they're not going to do anything for New York. The little guys, the small dispensers in New York, we have to keep going.

The car licensees that are out there that aren't licensed, that are affected by these injunctions, don't let that stop you.

Support the OCM. The OCM is here to back you up. To my farmers, all my farmers out there, keep going. Do not stop. You have all support. Everybody here is a team. Whether you're on the OCM, a car, an AUCC, AUCP, we're all a team. It's very imperative that we stick together and that we stand together because these MSOs are coming and they're here. The only way we're going to be able to compete and fight against them is by standing together. We can't fight with each other. And so I'm going to be quick and just say thank you very much for everything. We appreciate everything that you've been doing. Do not let anything that the courts or people are doing in the courts stop you or deter you. You guys are amazing. You work hard every day, all day. I do not envy your job. All the heavy lifting, in no respect. That's what's happening. They're not respecting the heavy lifters. These are the heavy lifters. These are the people that got this done. So thank you very much and have a good day. Thank you.

John McDonald followed by Kavita. I can't read that. It's Paria Sanchez, I believe. So John and then Kavita. Hi there. I'm John McDonald, Executive Vice President of Dauphin. Together with Harbor Community, the Dauphin Open Union Square Travel Agency on Broadway and 13th Street in February of 2023 after receiving our card license in November of last year. To date, we have employed more than 70 people from diverse backgrounds to work in our dispensary. Mostly people of color from communities that have been disproportionately targeted by the war on drugs. Some who participated in the legacy space and some who are returning citizens recently released from prison. These are entry-level positions that do not require a prior retail experience. Jobs with a good hourly wage, substantial shared tips, full benefits and a path for growth. We make a concerted effort to support women, BIPOC, legacy brands and LGBTQ community. We find ways to cross market with local businesses and support the economic growth of our entire community that has wholeheartedly embraced us. My father, George McDonald, who passed away in 2021, started the Dauphin over 30 years to offer new solutions to poverty, homelessness and incarceration. Our Ready, Willing, and Able program, work-based program for single adults in our permanent, supportive and affordable housing for senior veterans, people with physical and mental illnesses have impacted the lives of more than 30,000 vulnerable New Yorkers. Legalization of cannabis and the allocation of revenue from itself to impacted populations was my father's dream for many years. The time he spent with individuals disproportionately penalized by harsh drug laws, witnessing what incarceration does to deny them access to economic opportunity made him a passionate advocate for restorative, racial, economic and social justice. CARD is farsighted and empowers people impacted by mass incarceration to access economic opportunity, made our venture with our business partner, Harbor Community possible, leveraging their financial investment and the Dauphin's expertise with the population. This kind of public-private partnership inspires innovative solutions to long-standing and seemingly intractable social ills. With the revenue generated from this venture made possible by the CARD initiative, the Dauphin is enhancing our workforce development programming, hiring housing specialists to work with our program participants to find apartments they can afford and putting money into the pockets of our program participants and staff, 70% of whom are program graduates. Thank you. Thank you.

Kavita followed by Ruth Randall.

Good morning. My name is Kabitha Paria Sanchez. I'm the CEO of Canobronx. We work with directly impacted folks, mostly legacy folks in the Bronx.

This is a really tough moment. We all know that we're at a dangerous crossroads on two fronts.

As we think about the regs as they came in today, we want to talk about two issues. One is the early entry of MSOs. We've been hearing it as poisonous to social equity and reparations as it stands in the regulations right now. And two is the decimation of the CARD program through the lawsuits and other hostile tactics by multi-state operators. I'll say more about those things, but as a headline, we want to support the OCM, the CCB, the state in doing the right thing here. We believe in you. And I think as you've seen from a letter that 300 of us signed onto that was sent to the CCB on Friday, we humbly asked the OCM, I'm sorry, asked the CCB to direct the OCM to issue amended regulations that would revisit how the ROs are entering this market.

Their entry has to be delayed in order for this to succeed. And we know that you understand that and that most of the folks here understand that. We can't have corporate greed and through big wheat take over this market and undermine the dreams of social equity and reparations that bring most of us to this room. We also are really concerned about the decimation of the CARD program. And we know you are too and that you're fighting for it. We have to somehow see financial relief. People made whole that have those card licenses right now. There's much more to say. We're excited to hear about technical assistance and grants to community organizations. But at this time, that directive to the OCM is really,

really important. We think the state has the opportunity to do the right thing here and that you want to do the right thing in the face of tremendous pressures by capitalism.

Thank you. Ruth followed by Dr. CJ Segal Isaacson.

Hello, I'm Dr. CJ Segal Isaacson. I am both a legal cannabis cultivator, AUCC number 236, and I'm a semi-retired medical scientist and academic.

I represent Cannabis Farmers Alliance and I'm on their board of directors. I am also a member of the Farm Bureau and Canny. My daughter is a young woman of color and she and I are the majority owners of our LLC growing Renaissance. I am working very hard with my partners to start a small greenhouse-based cannabis farm in Canistota, New York with the immediate inclusion of the registered organizations and large corporate cannabis companies as well as the slow rollout of legal dispensaries. We are very concerned about whether we will be able to survive and thrive, whether there will in fact be a market for us by the time we have our first crop in the late fall. At the end of the last CCB meeting in Harlem, I had the opportunity to speak directly with Chairperson Wright and share my concerns. She asked me to write up a brief paper which she promised to circulate to other board members. Mr. Jeff Jones and I, he's also a CFA member, he and I wrote a position paper advocating a balanced market of small, mid-sized and large cannabis businesses. We sent it to Chairperson Wright as well as to several other organizations such as the Farm Bureau. We documented that while California like New York originally had laudable intentions of social equity, they caved into the corporate cannabis interests. This resulted in a flood of inexpensive corporate cannabis on the market and the death of many, many small and mid-sized cannabis businesses and with it their tax revenue. We cannot afford to let this happen in New York. A strong base of small and mid-sized cannabis businesses will achieve not only social justice and social equity goals, but dramatically increase tax revenue and act as a deterrent against illegal sticker shops.

We advocate the following, cap the rollout of registered organizations to one store per year starting in 2024, not in 2023.

If we start it in 2023, they will immediately open their second store at the beginning of 2024 and they will effectively have two-thirds of their stores.

We have to be confident the amount of indoor canopy they can grow, keeping in mind that they can grow five crops a year while most cultivators in New York can only grow one outdoor crop. Thank you.

Are you Ruth?

Ruth. And Ruth is going to be followed by Margaret Meekle. Sorry, I just meant to do that.

I'll keep this very short. My name is Ruth Randall and I am an owner, operator of Green Sugar Leaf Farms. We're 100% women owned organic herbal blend store right on the concourse of the Empire State Plaza.

I wanted to say a great big thank you. I wanted to listen to this meeting. I was not sure what to expect. You guys have done so much work.

It truly was a milestone meeting and I'm super positive and very excited.

I'm also a medicinal caregiver grower and I recently completed the inaugural CCTM webinar as a legacy grower.

I'm really, really looking forward to getting my certificate in the mail this week, but more importantly, my business partner and I are looking forward to working with and getting future assistance from the C program in our goal to have a New York State micro license.

And yay, Chip. I'm really excited about the Cannabis Hub incubator program. It's awesome. Thank you very much. Thank you. And then we'll have Margaret followed by Mike Kasaki.

The chair is for Graham. That's right.

Oh, do you have another? I'll give it to you. Hi, my name is Margaret Meekle and sorry to be such a wise guy, but that jumped off the page.

We're about to launch and we're very excited for today's progress. But in respect to the card, folks, I'm sorry. It's terrible. But you have to realize, too, that we need your support as new growers.

We really do. We don't fall under the category and we need to all coalesce. We need those licenses yesterday.

Please go to print as quickly as you can. We've been waiting for this for years and we cannot honestly, as can nobody in this room, compete with the big guys. There has to be a leveling of the playing field and there is none right now. You're talking about 100 feet of canopy.

Is there anyone in this room who can compete?

That tells the story, in my opinion. So we're asking you to pump the brakes.

I'm too old to be doing this adventure. I'm doing it with my son because I really know what kind of quality he can produce.

So don't put people like us out of the market. Welcome us in, support us, and support this group that can't compete. Thank you so much.

Mike, followed by Zamea Lewis.

I'm going to piggyback on that. My name is Mike Casace. I am the owner and CEO of House of Sachi. We are cannabis cultivators here in New York. I work with my family, my dad, my mom, and even my grandmother, who's 89 years old, comes in and labels the joints for us three days a week. When we say we're a family-run business, that's what we are. I'm also a member of the Cannabis Farmers Alliance. I'm a member of CANDY. I'm an active supporter of the CARD program. I think that program is amazing. But I sat here in multiple meetings, and I was with you guys, and you've been so helpful in so many aspects, but you told us three years. You told us that they would have to wait three years before they came into this market. And in March, when we were able to put in those comments, it was still three years. When you snuck in the new round of regulations, we were no longer able to make significant comments, and that's why this is completely BS. You also didn't come to the industry stakeholders like the Cannabis Farmers Alliance, like CANDY, to ask us what those changes would affect, which is also against it. And we relied on our businesses. My family has spent over a million dollars of all of our family money to build one of the nicest greenhouses and the best grows in New York. And I promise you this. I will not sell my flower to any one of those RO's facilities, and I hope that you tired licensees won't buy from them, because they just approved E-Tane to literally be purchased by Scott Miracle Grow. And in Buffalo, New York, they just approved on August 1st a 67,000 square foot facility. And I'm going to tell you right now, New Yorkers do not want the makers of Roundup growing their weed. [applause]

Zamea is going to be followed by Ervin Raboy. Thanks, Zamea. Hi, I'm Zamea, big gas dispensary card 348. I'm lost at this point. Oh, sorry, my mind is boggled. First, I want to say thank you to all you guys. It's really, really hard being the face. The last time I was up here, it's totally different from now.

You know, when I got my license, we weren't expecting this. We did everything you guys said in the timely manner. Within the 60 days, our target open date was August 22nd. And we gave everything we have. We have nothing left, absolutely nothing.

We're paying rent on our location, on two locations, and we have no more money. We don't know what the future holds.

So, you know, I just, please don't give up, you know? Like, please make sure that we make it through, that we make it through to the finish line. Please make sure that the card program succeeds. Like, we gave our all. We have, I mean, we spent our son's college tuition, and there's people that spent millions of dollars on the car licensees that we speak to all the time, and we're encouraging each other to stay in there. I'm a very hopeful person, and I'm always for the fight. I fought my whole life. I can do it. I don't know if I can, you know? So, please. [Applause]

I'm Irvin Reboie, followed by Renee St. Ja.

I'm Irvin Reboie from Pleasant View Harvest. I'm an AUCC down in Putnam County.

I wanted to thank for the CGS. That was really, really helpful to all the farmers.

I guess I'm just going to reiterate what pretty much every person who's come up here has said, which is hold off the RO's. There's no reason to let them in this early. They don't need the dispensaries. There's barely any open already. We have nowhere to sell our products to, and it can be delayed. It just doesn't need to be opened, and they don't need to get two dispensaries within the next year. That's basically it. Thank you.

[Applause]

Renee, followed by Matthew Reddy, more stringer.

Hello. I'm Renee St. Ja, I'm with New York Farm Bureau.

New York Farm Bureau represents farmers from across the state, including our hemp farmers and our adult use cannabis farmers.

As we've seen with the hemp market, we had its ups and downs, and we were hopeful that this opportunity for farmers to grow a new crop would go well, and maybe sometimes, but now we see issue after issue, so many barriers that our farmers have to face, and I'm just echoing the voices in this room that they need your help, and allowing the RO's to come in is not the answer. It is the issue, and it's just going to push the farmers out, just like you've seen in other states.

[Applause]

I want to add New York Farm Bureau to the voices in this room, and the voices from other organizations as well, an echo of saying please support our farmers. They are the true cultivators of our state. Please don't forget that. [Applause] Jeff Jones, followed by Nicole Richie. Yes, yes, so I just don't know where to start. I'm going to start with solutions, solutions, pies, pairing, incubator, Excel, seed. That's the hope for if this industry attempts to move on without us, and as you can see, our RO's disguise, excuse me, MSO's, disguised as RO's, because all of the RO's are MSO's, so MSO's disguised as RO's, who are going to be unleashed on the industry. You understand me? You're going to need some solutions, and I'm here to tell you, you might not like what I have to say, but crying about it, hating, that's not a solution, y'all. Crying and hating is a solution. A solution is a solution. Pairing, incubator, Excel, seed. Okay, you move forward, but how do we move forward with you? I want you to move forward. I want you to win, and if you take a scope around this room, or just look at what you got on, y'all, you all support MSO's. You all interstate commerce. We got China and other clothes on and stuff, and phones and everything else, so this whole thing about MSO's and this whole thing, I've never seen it or heard about it in any other industry, except around equity. Now, this dude said something to me, an MSO said something to me that haunts me to this day. He said this to me years ago when I was upset when he said it to me, and I wasn't in the right mind, I understand now. He said this, he said, "It's only a matter of time before I open up, because I got money, but you know who ain't going to open up? People without money." And I was upset, and I ended up leaving the conversation, but he was right. He was right. You understand me? So the PIES program is our money, and 100% ownership of your business. If you are a social equity card, the pairing incubator excels C. So keep that on your mind. Pairing incubator excels C, we're going to make it known through different organizations that we currently work with, so you guys can hear about that, but that's how we can move forward. Never mind how everybody else can move forward. They're going to move forward. They already opened up a lane for them.

I'm going to fight these folks. I'm not going to fight these folks. I'm going to try to make solutions and pair with these folks. So the pairing solution is they got to foot the bill for us moving forward, and it's percentages of their taxes, and I already presented this to MSOs. My wife created this program, and they were okay with it. So we got to be thinking about chest, not checkers. How do we move forward? They're going to move forward, I promise you. They already got a lane. They told you. They got a lane already, so they're going to move forward. Don't hate, we not hating. I didn't sign that letter because of that. You understand me? Solutions. What's your solution?

A moratorium? That ain't going to work. Money's going to work. Money's the only thing that's going to work. That's it, y'all. Hopefully I didn't take too much of your time. My name is Moors Stringer. Shock T. Greenlit is my brand and my label. Thank you.

Nicole Richie, followed by Thomas Ballistria. Oh, Lord.

I'm sorry.

Thank you.

Hi, two and a half. Please don't come.

Go ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Cannabis Control Board, my goal here today is less monologue and more dialogue. I want to do less speaking truth to power and more co-creating solutions with power. Share a woman right. Yes, sir. Two months ago, the universe put a boy from Montana together with a community leader from Brooklyn on a lonely street in Harlem. That meant something. I hope we soon have the chance to continue our conversation on community financing strategies that will help that young woman from New Bay and the young woman who was just up here open up their storefronts without having to sell half their shops down the river to Wall Street Sharks. Board member Knight, 15 years ago, the universe saw fit for me to design an architect, an online small business mentoring platform now in use today by Empire State Development. That means something. I hope to soon have a dialogue with you about how to turn the awesome enterprise development resources under your purview towards the success of small cannabis businesses in communities most impacted from Brooklyn to Buffalo.

Because, folks, we're going to need to get creative. The red carpet has all but been rolled out for large corporate interests, and the marketplace is now in grave danger of teetering uncontrollably out of balance. You have hard data in front of you now from California on what you can expect if you do not maintain balance in the marketplace. That is job number one.

These corporations are not our friends. They have at the heart of their DNA a priority that is in direct opposition to New York's social and economic equity agenda to produce profits for shareholders above all other concerns, and they are bullies.

They take out full-page ads in major newspapers to beat up the governor over problems they themselves helped to create. They hide behind the goodwill.

They behind behind the goodwill afforded to groups like disabled veterans in the worst form of corporate greenwashing. We need to double down now on small enterprises and community-first

models such as co-ops, collectives, and micro-business. We need to overcome the access to finance issue. We need a microloan program like Dashida's across the state. We need a state-backed loan loss reserve fund to stimulate lending by mainstream banks. We need greater access to markets. The showcase model needs to be extended, expanded, and improved. Consider a fast pathway for compliant hemp retailers and, of course, CODIFY Card.

Finally, finally, you need to take action now to prevent an extinction event for small struggling AUCCs. We are facing death by 1,000 cuts. Do you know that we are being forced to pay \$1,000 a month just to plug into the track and trace system? That's too much. We are the canaries in the coal mine for other small enterprises that are going to come after us. The marketplace is not functioning. It is out of balance. Please work with our community to fix these issues and keep these corporate sharks at bay. Thank you.

[applause]

Good afternoon. I'm Nicole Ricci. I'm the president of New York Small Pharma. I'm not going to stand here and reiterate what you're going to hear over and over again from everyone else. I just want to say that the process is a little disappointing. There's no denying that we've done something extraordinary here today in adopting an incredible package of regulations. But the fact that we have 280 pages of regulations, something that's never been done before globally, and thank you, Axel, for all of your work and always being accessible. And now, one question from the CCB. No deliberation. No discussion whatsoever. Just passing it immediately. And taking testimony after the fact makes it all seem like we're just barking at the wall.

[applause] We might as well have one of those birds that just adopt, adopt, because there's no discussion, and that is what's needed. You need to hear testimony from your public before you take a decision, and we need to hear deliberation. This is not a perfect package. It's a good package, but there

are a lot of issues with it that could have been deliberated and at least brought to light as opposed to from the public after the fact. It's just not acceptable. It has to change.

And providing a marginalized community and opportunity is not enough. You have to accompany that opportunity with the assistance. So these programs sound great, but unless the administration and the legislation seed and fund this industry and the C program, this is all just talking.

Thank you. [applause] Thank you, Nicole. We'll next have Thomas followed by Ben Dewar.

What's good? I hope everyone's well. My name's Thomas Belistria, Jr. I'm a mentee from the CCTM program. I came here today first and foremost to commend the board and the office for guiding the community this historic moment in post-cannabis prohibition history. I wanted to extend my gratitude for your diligence in carrying this heavy load for us and for your commitment to equity as we move forward together. I also wanted to highlight the importance of focusing on community healing at this inflection point in human history to help us all recover from the traumas that have been caused to individuals due to the ramifications of the enforcement of cannabis prohibition. I believe that this can be a time that we can share life experiences with one another and find that through the commonality that we all have in cannabis, we can foster mutual understanding and encourage paths towards mutual prosperity.

I would humbly ask the board to consider amending section 120.3 subdivision C, paragraph 1, to include a combination option for indoor and outdoor cultivation to allow micro businesses to compete in the adult use market. [applause] The current regulations limit the ability of micro businesses to be successful and in some cases make the structure of a micro business not economically viable given the ability of established licensees to produce cannabis grown in a controlled environment.

I would also ask the board to consider extending the 60-day period for license applications. I don't think that that is anywhere near enough time to allow people to get to the starting line, especially SAE applicants. There's no way it's going to happen and we're going to exclude people from the market that deserve to be first.

[applause]

I look forward to the continued support from the Office for the Mentees of the CCTM program and the possibility of having the privilege of being awarded a license in the adult use market so I can become part of the solution as we write the next chapter of post-cannabis prohibition together. Thank you for all that you do for the community and thank you for your time today. Thank you. [applause] We'll now hear from Ben followed by Jillian Dragoski. I'm sorry I messed up that name.

Thank you very much for the time today. My name is Ben Doerr. I'm Raven Dispensary's license holder 338 and I echo what everyone has said about the MSO and the RROs and keeping them out and all their Trojan Horse strategy using the veterans to try and get in any way they possibly can. It really shows the lack of character that they have. I guess I take my time now to ask for a call to action which is great to see all these cardholders and everybody who's been active since the court case and I hope that we're all there on the 15th as well to show this unity. I think we're underutilizing our power of social media. I see Mayor Hal, myself, a couple others. Some cute gifts aren't going to cut it. All right? It's time to come out of process paralysis. What is there left to lose? We're at the line to cross at this point. There's people who have nothing left, who've given it all already. If we're going to back each other, then we need to use that power of social media. We're all in process paralysis and it's time to go. We're worried about getting denied because if we stick our heads up, it's going to be whack-a-mole.

It's the power in numbers. It's the First Amendment and we need to start using it like we are today and this Friday. [Applause]

I do thank you for doing the heavy lifting. I know one card holder, many card holders, 463 of us are all a small part in the greater machine, but I wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors as well.

Thank you.

Jillian, followed by Patrick Weinart.

[Applause]

Hello, my name is Jillian Dragutsky, card number 168 of Astro Management and co-chair of the New York Card Coalition Women's Committee. It wasn't even two months ago that I was in front of you filled with a sense of hope and an exciting, equitable future. Today I'm terrified of the future of the market as a whole. I'm here to urge you to do two things to help save and foster a program that you built. We need you to urge the governor to codify card without codification, the card program will continuously be attacked and threatened if it survives at all. There's a real risk that card and all of us who followed the rules, regulations and guidance will potentially be ruined financially, emotionally and mentally. I'm going to mention financially again because many of us gave up other real opportunities to pursue and foster a framework that has been

to pursue a framework that has been halted by no fault of our own. The second thing I will urge you to do is to reconsider the program that rewards the RO's for their aggressive tactics that have hurt so many small businesses here in New York. It's not just the retailers that are being affected by these issues, it's the cultivators, processors, ancillary and consumers. It's the whole ecosystem that is being devastated.

[applause]

We have cultivators who are harvesting right now, yet still sitting on last year's product. We have processors who invested in equipment and product, retailers ready to open but are still under injunction,

applicants who haven't even been vetted by OCM yet, tax revenue that is being lost, unsafe and untested products being sold to consumers, many whom are unaware that they are buying illicitly, and consumers who have already proved that they will buy legally given the chance.

Many of us don't have the luxury of a paycheck because we divested other opportunities. We don't have the ability to hold tight while government figures things out. We put everything into this. We are hurting and by no fault of our own. We followed the prescribed and mandated process, followed the rules, only to feel abandoned by a system that is cognizant, only to be abandoned by the system. Please be cognizant of the precarious situation we are in. Please help codify card. Don't reward the RO's who so blatantly are against small business.

I have to ask you to stop because you have hit time, but if you give us the remainder of your statement in writing, it will be incorporated into the rest of the statements. I do have one question that I think 903 of us want to know. Will card have to reapply in a minute?

[Applause]

Patrick, followed by Peter Besnos.

Hi, my name is Patrick Weiner.

I am from James Garden.

And I am also representing the Canny Cultivation Committee. I am the Associate Chair.

Today's cannabis controlled board meeting allowed the door to open for big cannabis to come in and compete with New York-based businesses. People who are from New York who are trying to build

businesses here. But the Canny has always been at the forefront of solutions with this rollout, and today is no different.

For New York to protect its local-based small farms, the following steps must be taken. One, we must reform the potency tax. I know this is something we have been talking about a lot. [Applause]

This is something that is going to disproportionately affect the small businesses as the RO's can just pay it. Two, regulations must be immediately fixed. I said this includes giving the RO's in small and local cultivators and processors equal amount of canopy space. Like we said, these indoor processors will be able to turn over multiple crops every year. And three, we must prioritize the enforcement of the illegal operators instead of coming down on the legal small farms who are just, with more endless red tape. Like I said, from everybody here today, we are struggling, and these RO's coming in are only going to make things worse. Thank you. [Applause] Peter, followed by Catherine Miller.

Hi guys, my name is Peter. Peter Besnos. I represent, I'm the CEO of Hi. I had a lot to say, I don't know what else to say anymore, because everybody just did a great job saying everything that, and I don't want to reiterate everything that everybody else kept saying, but I am part of CART. I'm here to stand for CART, and I think everybody over here wants to really know that question that Julian just asked. What is going to happen with CART? Do we have to reapply? I mean, a lot of people have a lot of things on the line. Me, myself, I don't want to go into my story and tell everybody my story. A lot of people here know my story, but, again, speechless. I really just have no clue. We were given an opportunity by you guys, and now it just kind of feels like false hope, you know? We were set to be given a certain type of opportunity to help us, and I see that we're being set back further than we were probably before we even received this CART license. So please take all of that into consideration, and think about the people that are going to be hurt by all of this that's going on. Thank you guys. Thank you.

[Applause] Catherine, followed by Hal. Mckade.

Hi.

How are you? Again.

This is not the first time I've come to these meetings, and I'm sure it won't be the last.

I'm Catherine Miller, AUCC number 232. I represent Peregrine Toque.

I'm here to, again, I'm here again to express my concern about the continued rocky road to legalization.

For two years, we've relied on the guidance from OCM as we try to make important business decisions. Unfortunately, we're often left operating in a vacuum.

Emails go unanswered. We have no point of contact. When we have questions, we reach out, and it's nothing. I can't tell you the amount of emails I have sent and have gotten zero response. [Applause] Often, if you do get a response, it is never from a person. It is from a group, a committee, or a team. We would like to be able to speak to someone. Part of the frustration that we have is that we can never get a clear answer from someone that we can just ask a question of.

It's been another tough year for cannabis farmers. An extremely wet summer has led to a multitude of issues from greatly increased pest and disease pressure to outright crop losses. Many of these issues would have been mitigated, if not eradicated, had we been able to grow indoors. This is another example of how the RO is coming in and growing at huge canopies will push the rest of us out of the market. We just cannot compete. We're at the point of another harvest, and again, we stand at a precipice. What decisions should we make about that crop? Will we be able to sell it? My 22 biomass is still sitting in bags on the floor of the processors as they wait to see if orders are going to materialize.

I have yet to get paid for it.

How can we know what tier to transition to if we don't know what we're competing against? I respectfully ask that the OCM immediately release the total numbers of licenses that you plan to give out in each license and tier category so we can make informed business decisions.

I also ask that you revisit the canopy sizes allotted to the RO's and roll out of their stores. There's literally no way for us to compete. I ask that you revisit the micro-business regs and allow us to scale up as we become successful, and I ask for better communication between the OCM and license holders. Thank you.

[applause]

Hal followed by Christine Richardson.

How you doing? It's a little low for me.

Sorry.

My name's Hal McCabe. I'm the executive director of the Cannabis Association of New York.

People have said pretty much what we want to say. You've got two groups of people, the farmers and the cards, that are balancing on the edge of a pen right now, and they're facing ruin. Who's not facing ruin? The RO's. So do you know that one RO's grow space can replace ten of our cultivators right now? You've got to release, you've got to allow us to indoor grows immediately if you're going to open it up to the RO's. It just has to happen.

We're not going to be able to compete, and all of these people,

our goal is your goal. We want to get to the same place that you guys want to get to. We want the social equity and the restorative justice folks to succeed, and we want the farmers to succeed. We're trying to get to the same place. We put hundreds of hours of work into our comments on the regulations, only to see them ignored.

We've got 550 members representing the entire supply chain, a wealth of knowledge. Please take our comments to heart. Please make changes. I hate to see these things just go through without any adjustments, so thank you very much. Thank you. [Applause] Christine Richardson, followed by Tess Interlicia.

Sorry.

Lecia.

Are we ready?

So I haven't been coming to your meetings for this whole year, and I actually wasn't ever going to speak, but I thought maybe today after everything going on, I should. If everybody here at the board would look around, we're one family.

And this has been a long road. [Applause] I don't understand. Every time I come here, there's no answer on the board. We give our comments, but we never get an answer.

She asks, I ask, you ask, but when you explain everything, you never say, "Oh, we're going to do this, we're going to do this, we're just going to vote for it." So what do we do on our end? And now I get my license until I-19th. A whole year I waited, and now you have nothing. TROs, they come in, everything's a whole--

What are we supposed to do now when it's in your hands?

So we still don't have an answer. It just goes round and round and round and round. So at some point, would someone be able to help us or tell us what to do? You post everything, but there's nothing there. For me, I call, I get no answers, same as everybody else. It's the same circle, but for a whole year for me. It's been an entire year, not to mention what happened to me when I got arrested and how long I've waited and everything taken from me. I was a trauma nurse, 10 years took it from me.

Just borrowed, New York State took it. All of a sudden, you're going to give it back in a program,

and a whole year I wait to get it, and then, oh, sorry, it's gone.

So what do we do? There's no answers that haven't been any.

So are we ever going to get a reason or rhyme, or does anybody know what's going to happen next?

It's still the same silence.

And there's my silence to you that we're still in silence. That's it.

[Applause] Thank you, Christine. Tess and Talichia, followed by Joseph Calderon.

Hi there. There we go. My name is Tess and Talichia.

I am AUCC number 34 of Grateful Valley Farm in Steuben County, and I'm a founder and board member of the Cannabis Farmers Alliance, Farm Bureau, and Canning number. I'm also a family nurse practitioner. I'm a daughter, a sister, a mother, and a healer, and I'm a farmer.

I wanted to thank you for giving me a chance to speak my piece today, but I wasn't going to, as I've just about given up.

I've given up on the vision that I've had since the 90s for what legal cannabis could look like here in New York State, and I've just about given up on the state to do the right thing. I bust my ass. Every single day, I'm fighting day and night for this plant. I'm fighting for the tens of thousands of patients I've treated to be able to have access to this amazing plant, this beautiful plant that's saving lives, and she saved mine. She's healing people every minute of every day. How can we allow greed to shatter? Something so perfect. How can we let the fate of New Yorkers be crushed in the hands of just a few bullies? New York. How about gritty New York City, the one city who loves or married Jane like none other? New York, which happens to be, by the way, the most linguistically diverse city in the world. Over 800 languages are spoken.

How can we celebrate the glorious diversity and be proud of this while we sit back and welcome a handful of out-of-state cannibals to destroy our economy before it's even had a chance to take off? How's that okay?

[applause] Doesn't sound like social equity to me. As a farmer, we were asked to grow cannabis for the state of New York, so we did. But you didn't deliver. No, you put up roadblock after roadblock after roadblock. I don't want to complain anymore. I'm tired. I'm really frickin' tired. Families are suffering. I'm close to losing my farm again.

I'm sitting on lots of beautiful organic cannabis that's been deemed by several people some of the best-known grown that they have seen and tasted. But it's rotting. We've lost millions of dollars. We have done everything right, and I can't even feed my children.

I sold my tractor to save the farm in January. It's now September. I have nothing left to sell, oh, except for the, you know, hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of cannabis rotting, turning into CBN.

It's great. So my last plea to those in power to please remember September's Suicide Awareness Month, which professions are the highest risk for this? The service-oriented professions. No surprise there, right? Doctors, veterans, farmers. I had to call personally for a police, for a wellness check on a fellow cultivator, and I believe Canny also had to do a suicide crisis intervention for another. This is no joke. We're in trouble. Please do the right thing. Give the farmers a fighting chance to survive, to save this plant, and to give New York something to be proud of. And I beg of you to stand up for what is right so you may sleep at night knowing you didn't need that CBN that oxidized in my damn barn.

Thank you.

[applause] Joseph, followed by Christopher Sherwin. Joseph Calderon, followed by Christopher Sherwin.

Wow, it's almost the exact height.

That's like rare for a guy that's five foot five.

So I don't know how I can follow that up, but no to the ROs.

No to the ROs. Joseph Calderon, AUCC 34, Great Valley Farm, co-founder, CFA, cannabis, farmers alliance, and farm bureau member. At first I was going to stand here for two minutes in a moment of silence.

But I felt that was a little melodramatic. So I'd like to point to everyone to Rosalind Adams' article published two days ago in the city. [NewYorkCity](#). Big wheat is on the brink of a multi-million dollar surge in New York's cannabis market.

New York promised to put independent businesses at the heart of the legal pot industry. Now major medical marijuana companies are making their play amid the state's stalled retail launch.

Legally, AUCC's cards, AUCP's relied on the state to fulfill its regulatory and legal obligations to construct a functioning program in a conditional structure that A, promoted social and economic equity, and B, promoted environmental sustainability.

From my perspective, I don't see how this program, as well-intentioned as it is, is on the path to fulfill these objectives.

With the introduction of ROs and the resilience of 36,000 statewide illicit and illegal businesses, many conditional members will have a choice to be legal or illegal. The consequences of the current program is an alternative program that will be running parallel to the legal market, consistently eroding the ability for legal operators, especially small and micro businesses, to survive.

I am encouraged that the Council explain that this is a living document.

One final comment because I'm running out of time here. The holiest of alliances that will fulfill the promise of this program is distressed farmers and legacy growers supplying quality cannabis to cards and consumers. So say no to the ROs.

Christopher followed by Berkei Sabat.

Christopher Sherwin.

If Christopher is in here, we'll move to Berkeley Sabat.

Hello. Hi. My name is Berkeley. Card number 144, Elevate Soho.

I just wanted to open up with a piece of the Constitution. It says that all men are created equal, endowed with their creator by inalienable rights for the pursuit of liberty and happiness.

Now, when that was written, that was not a reality for millions of Americans who were living in indentured servitude and slavery.

And that continued to be a goal that this nation tried to fulfill for hundreds of years. Unfortunately, people from our background and our communities paid the price for generations of policies that hurt them the most and were specifically targeted to hurt them. That includes such recent policies such as the drug war.

And when I saw the original MRTA, I was very happy because outside of just being a cannabis law, I feel like this is the first time in my living memory that the state has taken action to right the wrongs of generations of economic, social, and racial injustice. And it's quite sad to see the state of the card program today. It's under injunction.

Large cannabis companies are assaulting the program from all sides.

Card licenses like me, who put everything into this business, who thought this program was going to be an avenue for years of injustice that we faced, our constitutional rights being violated,

weaponization of cannabis programs against our communities, and also even the injustice of being stopped and frisked all the time because they thought we had cannabis on us.

To see the program where it is today, it's just sad. And I'm urging the governor to call a special session to try and codify the card program.

Because I believe this program is worth fighting for, not just because it's an economical program, but it's a social justice program that's aimed at giving an example for not just New York, but for other states to right the wrongs of years of social and racial and economic injustice that plagued our communities. So thank you. Thank you.

Matthew Waddell, followed by Alexander Anderson. Matthew Waddell.

Hi, everyone. My name is Matthew Waddell.

I am a legacy grower. I'm the owner of the Runners High brand, which I am hoping to be able to get off the ground. And it's a brand of cannabis-based athletic fuels, which is kind of novel. It's something that is going to come from the Adirondack Park and be something that New York can be proud of, hopefully.

I'm a CANDI member, and I'm a recent mentee from the CCTM program.

I'm an eighth generation New Yorker, and I'm working to carry on the legacy of conservation and environmental conservation that my grandfather left to me.

We're working to do something that the RO's really are not, and we see this very disingenuous argument happening where the RO's, as everyone has said, are coming in and trying to basically piggyback on and create an opportunity for them to come in, for the MSOs to come in. And there are people who are trying to do better things for the environment and for the state.

I'm trying to conserve 500 acres, and I'm working with the Adirondack Land Trust to create a 500 acre conservation easement with 3,000 acres of Hudson River watershed north of almost all of these people. And I'm protecting that water by protecting this place that's sacred to me and my family and all of my ancestors, and those who were stewards of the place before that. And I'm giving this back, working with the Adirondack Land Trust to give this back and create a place for people to come and enjoy cannabis in a different and positive way.

And so Codify Card is the only way that we are going to be able, as micro businesses and other businesses, to actually sell a product that New Yorkers want to buy, and not this garbage.

Thank you.

Alexander Anderson, followed by Jeanette Miller.

Okay, thank you.

Hello, everybody. My name is Alexander Anderson. I'm the Executive Director for Reentry Theater of Harlem. It's a reentry program for individuals coming out of prisons and jails.

I came here today. I don't have a chubb application. I came here because my wife and I have a chubb application that's being pending. I really don't know what status it is. We haven't heard anything back. We applied in September. I wrote several emails trying to get a decision on our application and haven't got anything back. So I'm asking the board here today to at least give us an answer. We feel that we have plans and hopes, like everyone else here, for the people who we work with. I am committed to helping individuals who are coming out of prison. I did five to 15 years for possession of marijuana. It devastated my life. I'm a social worker. I lost my job. It's hard for me to get a job without having to

explain while I was incarcerated. So this opportunity to have a chubb license will allow me and my wife to employ the people who we both work with, we're both social workers, and to employ those people that come out, that get involved in our theater program. We thought that this would be a great idea, but what I'm hearing now is maybe we shouldn't even pursue it because I hear all the problems that people are going through.

So I just want to ask that we at least get an opportunity that our license will, the number is 904, gets a chance to be reviewed and considered. I handed out my statement with a brochure because I wanted to say that the individuals that I work with, people who have come home, have been invited by one of the biggest synagogues in New York City to help open up their holidays.

I thought that was really great that they invited us to put on a performance like that. These individuals need jobs. Two of them just came home, got jobs with certain organizations and got fired because one did 40 years and didn't know how to do case management. And they got fired. So I'm hoping to get a chubb license so that I can put people to work that are coming out of prison and that come to our organization to get their lives together. Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Jeanette Miller, John McDonald. I think John McDonald already spoke, yes.

So after Jeanette, if we can have Marcos Ribeiro.

Hi everybody, Jeanette Miller. I'm AUCC number 120. I'm the current chair and co-founder of the Cannabis Farmers Alliance. I've been with Farm Bureau for over 10 years. I am sit on their Cannabis Committee. I'm happy Renee was here today. I thought of like 100 different ways to say what I want to say today, but I just can't get it. Like some of you don't know me, so you don't know my story, but that's not important, right? We got to take action. But I want to remind us first of all, some things that you all said. You said Christopher Alexander, I can't thank the Governor Hochul enough in the legislature for providing us with the tools to make up the lost time. We keep equity and inclusion at the center of the

New York cannabis industry. And you said here that we are, with this bill, we are putting New York farmers, not big corporations, at the forefront of our industry while protecting public health by delivering safely grown cannabis products. All right, I want to go to now Tremaine. You said, I'm thankful for the Governor as well. This law places New York farmers first in line to grow cannabis with the timing, which is critical to our efforts to roll out the adult use program. With this bill, we are continuing to put equity and inclusion at the forefront of the cannabis industry. I want to say, I mean, I have a lot of quotes here. Let me go with Michelle Hinchey. Today's an exciting day. This bill, New York has farmers, the ability to start cannabis market has been signed in the law. The MRTA sets the foundation for our state to build a truly circular cannabis economy that puts New York farmers first in small business dispensaries at the center of growth to production. And with the signing of this bill, farmers can now put the seeds in the ground to ensure that we meet the demand of the burgeoning industry. And then she thanks Governor Hochul who has said, I am proud to sign this bill with positions, New York farmers to be the first to grow cannabis and jumpstart the safe, equitable and inclusive new industry we are building. New York will continue to lead the way, delivering our commitment to bring economic opportunity and growth to every New Yorker in the corner of this great state. Okay, so you guys said that and we relied on you and we heard reliance a lot because reliance is a very important term. I want you guys to know I'm using reliance because it's important. It's going to come up again. We relied on you and you relied on us and we totally did it. We totally put those seeds in the ground. We grew two years of great cannabis and we have nowhere to put it. I have 500 plus pounds sitting and rotting right now and there's nowhere to go for it. And I happen to be the suicide person, the person that wanted it was going to kill myself that my friend over here called for. I had the police come to my house because I'm done. I was homeless at 14 and this ruined my life. New York State ruined my life becoming an educator and I'm regulating us out of that. The gaslighting that happens. I wore a noose around my neck today because I feel like I'm going to hang myself and I don't want to disrespect anybody because it's not about disrespecting anybody. But I like if I hang myself, I take the rope off and I'm going to hand it to you guys. You can pass around hand to the governor and then you have the rope that hung me in your own hand. You know, it's there. All right. We're tired. We're done. We're struggling. We need help. You don't answer. Only reason I get answers is because I call and I call and I call and I do this.

My name is Marcos. We're a barrel. A U C C 36 harvest. I wanted to have my comments on the record. I'm very concerned about letting multi state operators just come into the market. The same time we're trying to establish ourselves. I'm literally in a handful of stores right now and it's not going well in terms of new stores taking us on. And I'm very concerned. So I just want to go on the record saying that I do not support multi state operators joining the market for numerous years. Give us a chance. Let me build my brand. They don't need it. They don't need the capital. They don't need it. We need it. We're New York State farmers. I've been a farmer for many, many years now and it's not fair. I'm struggling. I'm struggling and it's hard for me and I support card, codify card. Thank you. Thank you. Jeffrey Hoffman followed by Hugo Rivas.

I came to the meeting in January and I told you of card applicants that paid their application fee instead of paying their rent. I don't know how we got here. I don't know how we created regulations that are so susceptible to legal challenge. I know the general counsel quit in June. Maybe he was unhappy with what you were proposing and was recommending to you not to do it, to do something different. The first retail application period needs to be open to everyone at the same time. What does that mean to you? Let's ask everyone in the room what that meant to them. We didn't do that, right? So now I have a lawsuit preventing 440 some odd folks from opening.

We have farmers that can't sell their products anywhere. We have process as folks have said that has spent all their money. So what do we need to do here? I'm with Mar Mar. I'm going to keep my hands out of my pockets.

What are the solutions? What are the solutions? We got a we got a codified card. I've been holding the sign up back here. Everybody's been saying it. That's your solution. The solution is not wait to wait for this lawsuit to have card be found unconstitutional. I'm an attorney and I'm telling you that's what's going to happen here. Okay, that is what is going to happen. So we got a codified card. Okay, and we got to do a better job in creating our regulations. They can't be so susceptible to legal challenge. Part 116, which is card was susceptible to a dormant Commerce Clause situation. It's susceptible to these state lawsuits. You got three of them. Now we can't have regulations that are so susceptible to challenge. You're never going to open this program. Never. I know many of you, Mr. Burnaby, we've interacted a lot. Aaron, we've acted a lot interacted a lot. Mr. Cogia, we've interacted a lot. I love these guys. I can't believe you said Mr. Cogia to his wedding with all this stuff going on. I can't imagine how that how that how he felt about that. Please work with these folks. I begged you in January. Please work with them. I know this is difficult.

If it was easy, everybody would be doing it. It's hard work. But we can't do it the way we're doing it. You're hurting people tremendously. The very people who were supposed to help the cards would have been better off if they'd have opened illicit stores.

And I don't want that. I fight with people all the time about having a regulated market. But that's the fact. These people are broke. And they'd be having all the money that all of the thousands of stores have made in the process. So I beg you, please answer the phones. Better regulations. Work with the governor, please, to codify card. He's going to call a special session, perhaps, about the migrant crisis. Let's do this. There are solutions. Please, let's do this. Thank you. Thank you, Jeff. Hugo Rivas, followed by Dashida Dawson. So it's going to be Hugo Rivas, followed by Dashida Dawson. Thank you.

Hello, everybody. Thank God for today, yesterday, tomorrow. Thank you to OCM.

It's a monumental day. OCM, congratulations. This amazing accomplishment. It feels amazing to be a part of this day, almost. Thank you for the opportunity.

We have followed the state's guidance and now have invested years of time and tens of millions of dollars collectively. We are asking for our state representatives and our government to step up and have a special session to codify the card program into law. It's never too late.

The same social equity group that the state claimed to want to help by enacting the card program now faces substantial irreparable harm. The harm to themselves, their families, spouses, children, and the communities that they set out to support with community impact and education programs.

The cards need you to make the change. Stop MSOs and ROs. They are coming in at the end of the year. You have set three. We, the people, say come in at the year 2024 and at the end of that year. We need this. The prisoners doing time and did time or are in the family suffering from not having them present for cannabis convictions need this. The society that thinks it's okay to convict people for cannabis but yet think they deserve to profit from marijuana need this. Shout out, the law makers not enact swiftly. They are adding insult to injury and are showing that they, those claims, they want to help that they are unfortunate and willing to support in their time of need. We have done everything right. Follow the guidance and need you now. Hopefully this does not fall in deaf ears as it has felt for the past year. You always say that your success is our success but we're not being successful right now. So please, let's change this around. Thank you. Thank you.

We'll have Dashida Dawson followed by Cornelius Jones.

Thank you. Thank you, Chair Wright. My name is Dashida Dawson and I am a registered medical cannabis patient. I'm also a child of the war on drugs. A long time, long time, New York cannabis advocate and educator and now the founding director of Cannabis NYC. Where over 200 card licensees have been provisionally approved in our jurisdiction. So without a shadow of a doubt, I stand here to firmly say no to RO and to stand with the card licensees as well. But I will also acknowledge that it took a hundred years nearly to ruin the reputation of this plant and it is somewhat disconcerting to see how we believe that this should be done in a matter of years. As Axel said earlier, some of us have been on this journey for nearly a decade and we are excited to see so many people that have come to the table, but recognize that we will need to double this amount every single meeting to get what we need to happen here. A lot of people are Johnny come lately and we welcome you. We do, but this law and what we've been trying to accomplish would never have been accomplished without the leadership that we have of O.C.M. And so I do think it's important just as a government official, someone who chose to sacrifice my own journey in this industry to acknowledge how difficult it is to move government. Government has never supported black and brown and or social equity. We are literally doing what America has never done before. And therefore, it's very possible that we will continue to make mistakes as we are trying to go through this. I definitely want to make sure everyone's voice is heard. And I agree that in this process, it does seem absent of the voice first, but that's why we have the public comment period. That's why we have to continue to show up in droves. And I also just want to caution this. Be careful listening to the opinions of those that haven't achieved what we want to achieve.

If you never fought for equity, how are you standing here talking about it? Right. If you've never been at the forefront of this journey, how are you now here? At the end of the day, a lot of people made a lot of comments about what will happen if we allow big companies to come into this industry. And like the brother said, that's probably going to happen regardless. And so we do need to have solutions and some of the solutions will be regulatory. But as a person who is overseeing a jurisdiction with so many cannabis consumers, some of the solutions are what we buy and how we buy. And at this point, just as a consumer, there are some places that I will not shop. And we know on the record what people are doing to block the progress here. And so we can't reward them regardless of if they make their way into the market. We need to let everyone know. And part of the Liftoff Cannabis NYC tour is really about public education around exactly how we've come together. It isn't about hating on the state's effort. We're not going to love every line in over 300 pages of regulation. But the good news is we didn't put in a statute. Thank you, Chris, for that. And we get the opportunity to continue to iterate and bring more people. But as someone who's been doing this for almost a decade, we need this whole room filled wall to wall with the same comments, with the same cooperation and collaboration and support of our OCM and NCCB. Because no other state has attempted to do this. Our country still isn't trying to do it. Trying to reschedule isn't going to help all of you as well. So again, get educated fully on what's happening. And as you move forward, just remember that the people in charge have from the beginning been on this fight. They have also lost wages, chosen a path that is poverty. Trust me, I know. Working for government to be able to make this happen. We work with very limited staff. Many emails do not get responded to, but I feel terrible. But at the end of the day, we are still aligned in the mission. And that's why the executive director said from the door, we stand with Card. So I don't believe Card's going away. I think we have to continue to fight for what is right and continue to stand here and say these words. So Sheeda, I'm sorry, I have to ask you, we're time up already. Yes. So I will just end with Cannabis NYC is here to support. Thank you. Thank you.

Cornelius Jones, followed by Beck Hickey.

Good evening, everyone. My name is Cornelius Jones. I'm a member of the LICC. I received my license in April this year, and I was very appreciative. I still am.

And I see what's going on with the state being sued and everything. But there's 63 of us out here in Long Island, and we're struggling out there. And we need the state. We need everyone we can. We need help. And we definitely don't need you all to forget about us. And that's all I just wanted to say. I wanted to bring that to your attention. I have more to say, but I'm choked up inside. I can't get it out. But thank you so much, man. Thank you for allowing me to speak. Thank you. Beck Hickey, followed by Eric Larkin.

Hi, thank you. I'm here today, first and foremost, in support of card license holders. My name is Beck Hickey. I'm an advocate and friend to many of those card license holders.

And they are struggling to keep their businesses and their families afloat. I stand against the early entry of the RO's into the adult market. You need to slow their rollout so you can first take care of the lives you are holding in your hands.

But if you are really opening applications in three weeks, I need to make one more point. The passage of the MRTA in New York was a huge step towards righting the wrongs of the past and lifting communities that have been targeted for decades. I applaud the work of the CCB and the OCM and what you have done to not only deliver on the promises of the MRTA, but to do even more when possible. It's not an easy task. No other state has been able to make the progress we are making in New York, but you still have a lot of work to do. We currently have over 280 adult use conditional cultivators, 40 conditional processors, and 463 adult use retail license holders. What stands out as a glaring inequity is that currently the licensed cannabis industry in New York is less than 5% women, and women of color even less. While these numbers make sense given the fact that most marijuana convictions during the war on drugs were men, the farming industry in the US is dominated 65% by men, and 94% of startup investment money goes to men.

You have a lot more work to do for the hardworking, groundbreaking women entrepreneurs in New York cannabis.

Currently in the US, 42% of all small businesses are women owned. Women take more risks, hire more people, and invest more in those workers. Women of color employ over 2.2 million people in the US, and studies show that women of color hire and promote more people of color. All of that being said, the MRTA calls for a diverse and vibrant cannabis industry in New York, and if you truly want to take that on, as you review the new applications, you need to start prioritizing women.

Thank you.

Eric Larkin, followed by David Kniek-Ponsky.

Hello, my name is Eric Larkin. I'm from Juniper Jill Cannabis Co., conditional cultivator, license 133. I had so much to say before coming here, but everyone here has already said it better than I ever could, so I guess all that's left for me is to express my gratitude. My gratitude for being a part of this industry, my gratitude for togetherness, for everyone here making their voices heard, and also my gratitude for you guys doing such a difficult job, all these tireless hours and efforts to make the best decisions to progress the industry. And all that I could ask is that you hear the voices of everyone here, and try and make the best decisions going forward for everyone. Thank you.

David, followed by Annette Fernandez.

Hello everyone, Madam Chairwoman, members of the Control Board and the OCM. My name is David Kniek-Ponsky, CEO and founder of Freshly Baked NYC, Card Retail Licency, number 652. We are members of both the Card Coalition and of CanE. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on the record again today, although I'm not sure I'll be able to add more than what everybody else before me has so eloquently stated. We find ourselves yet again at a pivotal moment in the cannabis industry in New York. 440 retail licensees heralded as the cornerstones of an equitable cannabis industry are stuck in limbo.

The rest of the licensed supply chain waits behind us, poised to further drive the industry forward, but similarly stuck in limbo alongside of us. New York State made a public commitment to attempt to right the policy wrongs and moral failures of the decades of unfair, unjust, targeted harassment of vulnerable and marginalized communities. We heard this call, and we believe in this mission. We took up our marching orders and stood up to do the hard work. We invested not only our money, but our time with our families, our personal and professional reputations, and our financial livelihoods into making this program a reality. Despite many obstacles, limited retail options for farmers, inadequate funding for retailers, and judicial uncertainty, we have persevered. Many card businesses, however, are in immediate precarious financial position and face the grim possibility of failing and being on the brink of financial ruin.

My own family's life savings have been decimated and were being steadily bled dry.

Meanwhile, MSOs are looking to seize the market opportunities that we were promised and that we have worked hard for. If unchecked, they will unfairly dominate the industry, nullifying our efforts and our investments.

We're not asking for handouts, but we do demand fairness. Solutions to begin addressing the ongoing failures have been proposed by groups like CANDY and the Card Coalition. You've heard them repeated here today in the public comments. It's up to the state now to enact those changes, revisit and restore the MSO entrance timeline, putting them back to their original schedule, and cement the card program directly into the MRTA, eliminating the legislative vulnerabilities of the program for once and for all. We've done our part, now it's the state's turn. The situation is volatile and desperately needs your intervention. We don't just deserve your support, we have earned it unequivocally. Thank you, David. Annette, followed by Yvette Brown.

Hello, and I want to thank the OCM and their CCB for their work. Obviously, Chris Alexander, I'm always on your side because as a black regulator, I know that you are trying your very best, and that for me has always given me hope.

Dr. West said you can't need the people if you don't love the people. I would say you can't need the plant if you don't love the plant. We love the plant and we love New York, and we love ourselves, which is why we are here.

We should not be surprised that a New York estate in the US where no system on record to date has been equitable, special interests would infiltrate.

Just like every other issue in America, cannabis has been co-opted by corporations. This would not be significant if we were playing on a level playing field. We are out moneyed, out lobbied, and out litigated.

The multi-state operators have been here for seven years as medical providers, staking their claim, they celebrated having first movers advantage. In seven years, the New York medical program, I'm a medical patient, by the way, has never had more than 150,000 patients. They have had their opportunity to show what they can do with promos and discounts even, something that will not be allowed in adult use. They have failed their shareholders, and I understand that they have some explaining to do, and that's none of our business.

As New York small business owners and entrepreneurs, it's none of our business. The top 10 MSOs, some of them here in New York already, owe a whopping \$500 million in federal taxes.

This is actually an accounting strategy, but I don't want to digress. I'm a prisoner of hope and a native New Yorker. I, like many others, are still traumatized by the socioeconomic disparities in Washington Heights, a place that I love so much because it's where I'm from, uptown forever.

The Heights and so many other communities across the state are in desperate need of new economic opportunities and better services.

In uptown, it's our children who don't have access to nearly enough enrichment. We deserve the best of opportunities. We deserve reparations, access to capital that is not predatory, and first movers advantage.

Know that this New York cannabis business community won't stop on our quest for healing and transformation in New York. Thank you.

Yvette Brown, followed by Sean George.

Is Yvette here?

So we'll move on to Sean, Sean George, who will be followed by Kate Crowther.

Hello, my name is Shagata. Can we raise this up?

Okay, so my name is Sean George, and I've been listening to everybody today, and a couple of things I just want to say is, first thing first, I want to say is that I know what it is to be used. I'm a black man, been incarcerated twice, marijuana is saying. I know what is being used, and I see what is going on a lot here, as all of us is being used.

And we're not saying who we're being used by. I heard ORs, I hear MOS. I don't hear nobody calling out names of CEOs, or corporations, or people who are backing these people who are doing this lawsuit. All I'm hearing is people blaming who we're supposed to be cooperating with. The OCM, each other, the growers, that's all the people whose names I actually heard call out in this whole thing. Never once did I hear, "What's your call them, OROs?" We made them into these big boogeymen, instead of understanding that the only way you can stop being used is if you cooperate with each other, and

especially people who are being pitted against each other. Now, I'm not saying the OCM is perfect, but I am saying that they are the first to do this, and anybody who does anything first, if you have seen the history, there's always been mistakes, there's always been problems, there's always been situations. So what I would say is, I would like for a lot of the solutions that came up in here today, by people who are actually doing it, to actually us come together and see how we can implement it, and bring it to the OCM, and bring it to a way that we can cooperate. Because that's what they're doing. They're not coming up here cursing the OCM out. Like he said, it's going to be inevitable. They're up there, and they're making sure that they're getting the stuff they need.

Are we providing for them? Are they our people? Are we making sure that we're going to get the stuff that we need for them by making sure that they have the stuff that's from us, instead of just up here crying and yelling, and making division amongst each other. We need to start calling out the people who are actually making this a problem, which is the big business. But that's all I gotta say. Thank you. Thank you.

Kate, followed by Eric Larkin. Wait, I think Eric already spoke. He's got his name on here twice. So we're going to move to France Rice. Kate, followed by France. Is Kate here?

Okay. France, Rice, not here. Willa Smiley? Not here. Oh, Emma is? All right. So we'll hear from Willa Smiley, and then we'll move on to Emma Butler. Butler, sorry.

Oh, it is Butler? Okay, I'm sorry. Somebody wrote a row.

Afternoon, everybody, and the board. I have, first of all, hi, good afternoon. My name is Willa Smiley. I've been a nurse forever and a day. I spoke the last time.

I just have a few questions on the board. I heard when they were talking about the cannabis research, she threw out some numbers, \$10,000 to get something, then another \$200,000 to get something. I would like some clarification on that. And with the other brother that came up here talking about offering solutions, my solution is education. I know that, and I feel a lot of you were talking about the car, the expenses, and so on.

My take on this is that we do not want to leave people behind. And I'm saying that to say, what about educating our people who consume the cannabis? Number one, my focus with my organization is seniors, baby boomers, and we know we are the ones that use cannabis the most. But the educating them because they are bombarded with so much, and especially with the illicit stores that are around. They're going in, they're buying it, they're using it, they're, anyways, they're going in, they're buying it, and they're not being educated on what, how, the need. They are taking chances, they're spending their money on we that is no good, and they'll say, because they'll tell me as a nurse, my grandson went and bought this, and it was no good. Can you tell me what? And as an educator, as someone who wants to keep people safe, you throughout the person that was talking about the research, you throughout the notion about the Compassionate Care Act. The Compassionate Care Act is something that needs to be researched, it needs to be taught, because our primary caregivers are the ones that are dealing with these seniors, and per New York State, as a caregiver, they can help their patient get through with it.

And we, but they themselves need to be educated. At the top of the chain, our practitioners, our nurse practitioners, our physicians, they need to be educated, because patients are teaching them, and patients are afraid of sharing with them that they use we. The drawback to this is the fact that if they're on other medications, all of this combined can cause unwanted effects. As an educator, we need to ensure that our patients, our people, when they consume, that they're safe. Thank you. So I would like to work with you guys. Give me a job, I'll be your primary educator. Thank you.

Emma, followed by Roger Thomas. I'm sorry, are you are perfect. That's what I was calling. I was telling you who's coming after you. Roger Thomas will follow you. Thank you. So, my greetings to the cannabis control board. And I am in support of all the card licensees, those who are applicants waiting. I am a veteran, and I was an officer in the United States Air Force Nurse Corps. So, I just want to let you know that there are veterans who are supporting the card users as opposed to the four service connected veterans who decided to place a lawsuit in this regard. But what I would like to say, so my time is not used up, passage and promulgation of a new New York legislative legal instrument by the members of the New York Senate is imperative to legally protect the defaulted New York conditional adult use recreational dispensary licensees. The defaulted card licensees should receive social equity and financial priority recognition and support during the 2023, 2024 New York Senate docket. Definitely before the hearing, which is scheduled for October the 30th, 2023. Although a fact finding hearing is necessary, it is evident to me that gross negligence by Governor Hochul, the New York legislative members, and the OCM's Cannabis Control Board has caused harm to the licensees of the card program. In addition, the owners of the New York medicinal cannabis dispensaries and their paid lobbyists, we need to lobby. That's what we need to do guys, are taking advantage of the failed oversight by the Attorney General Latisha James, the Governor Kathy Hochul, the members of the New York legislative body from 2021 to 2024, and the OCM's Cannabis Control Board because of their failure to protect the valuable human and financial resources of conditional adult use recreational dispensary licensees. The early indicator to allow the New York medicinal cannabis dispensary license owners to enter the New York cannabis market in 2023 instead of 2025 is another example of failed oversight and protection of the social equity and financial support to the defaulted adult use New York cannabis licensees as we move forward and with the remaining application processes in 2023 and 2024. Ms. Emma, I'm sorry, I know you have it written. Could you please submit it to the board so we can put your entire comment into our record. But just for time's sake, right now we've extended, we've overextended the time. Thank you, though.

Roger Thomas, followed by Hal Miller.

My name is Roger Thomas. I'm a stakeholder in this industry you guys have built. It's great. I myself believe that you guys are gonna get us this mess, but that's just me. Unfortunately, a bunch of us don't know what to do. If you guys could be a little bit more transparent so we could sleep at night. We have

transparency is causing some of us to have meant will cause some of us to have mental issues. We have can't sleep. Remember now we are some of us are not working. Invest time, money. We don't know what to do because you guys are not being too transparent is causing arm to us. All I'm asking if it's possible. Also, if needed, please reach out to us the stakeholders. The brand doesn't matter right now. We're stakeholders. Please reach out to us for help. If possible, we are capable of helping that you wouldn't believe how smart some of these stakeholders are in the first court hearing the interveners at a lawyer with Ooh, Shattar, I'm not sure where he is. We are profound effect. So please, if possible, reach out to us for help. We will help you. We want to invest all our money to this time.

And please just be a little more transparent so we could sleep at night. We don't gotta cry. We don't gotta worry about, you know, our kids tuition. Should we go get a job? I don't know if I should sign my lease right now or not.

Chairwoman, you asked me once when would I be open up in Hudson? Well, my lease is just there. Should I go sign it or not? I don't know. You know, so I'm just please be a little more transparent and let us know what's going on and reach out to us stakeholders for help. We're willing to help. We came this far. We're not going to quit. I know you guys are doing a great job. I appreciate it. Don't give up. And just so you know, I learned I learned a new word over the last two weeks. I know what it meant. I think Jeffrey got a sign codify. I know what it meant to like last week and I love it. Please, how to fuck hard.

Thank you, Roger. How Miller followed by Carleen Hughes.

Hello, Chair. My name is how Miller, the one half of two buds enterprise card holder 438. I'm not going to take up much time, but everybody said what they wanted to say and it was on point. So I just wanted to show my support and I'm ready to open up. Thank you. Thank you.

Carleen Hughes, followed by Walter. Walter. I messed that up. I know correct me when you come up here, please.

Good morning.

I'd like to tip the hat to Chris Damien and the board for your hard work and give some respect to Axel with whom I shared a pivotal smoky elevator ride with Doug Green about eight years ago, cannabis Excelsior.

I'm a medical cannabis patient here in New York. I'm a former legacy market participant and I serve as the deputy director for the New York City chapter of normal. I'm the co chair of the education committee for canny and I sit on a host of national cannabis roundtables along with many other Tyler's advocates who contributed to several white papers for both the MRTA many rounds of regulations to help steer this program. I currently represent card clients and potential applicants. Last year at a town hall in the Hudson Valley, the O. C. M. Told potential card applicants that they wouldn't need fancy lawyers or consultants. Trust us.

Unfortunately, the well intended efforts have only continued to cause grave harm to the very people you're trying to help. Please codify the card program. After leaving the highly regulated wine business here in New York in 2014, I beat the door down at any medical RO company I could to try to get a job in legal cannabis in 2015 to strengthen my knowledge base in the regulated market. I ended up working for two of the medical cannabis companies here in New York and I saw firsthand the desperate need for a neutral third party nonprofit to help deliver resources to those in need and support the goals of the MRTA because the RO's have not and will not do their part for the community or small businesses.

I was invited to participate in the CHIP initiative as well and I'm very excited to do that. Concerning the RO's entrance to adult use, documents for submission for existing RO's to enter the adult use space should ensure not only compliance with sustainable practices and things that were mentioned in the

earlier but that they should actually be in compliance with the compassionate care act. Meaning they're actually vertically integrated and have substantive community impact plans. With OCM's robust effort on enforcing a list of smoke shops, it should also be focused on enforcing compliance of existing RO's to be compliant with the CCA and their community impact plans should be made public and they should be not eligible for renewal if they don't contribute to community through community based neutral nonprofit programs.

Ms. Hughes, Colleen, I'm sorry, we are at the time. I'm going to ask if you could please submit the remainder to us so that we can include it in our agenda. Thank you.

Walter followed by Gregora Bogner.

The pronunciation Ukrainian is the Vahyun and Ellis Island is I watch you. So, whatever way. Okay. Thank you. I just want to thank the board for their hard work and I would like to remind the board that their applicants, which haven't been approved, which haven't had their questions answered and I respectfully ask that the board consider them licensees with the same rights as those that have been approved or potentially approved. We've all worked hard and I think we deserve the chance to pursue our goals.

Thank you very much.

Gregora followed by Zach Sarkees.

How you doing? My name is Greg Bogner.

I am CEO of the triple BBB LLC out of Yonkers, one of the third largest cities here in the state.

I've been at my location now for probably about two years. I'm a current hemp CBD license holder. In addition to a retail vape e-cigarette all because the city of Yonkers wants to not have clarification between O.C.M. and card and discuss where the third largest city in the state is going to do. We have not one legal dispensary other than a medical facility. I've had my location open for two years, met all the requirements under card, woman owned business with the criminal conviction, four years we've been open, now selling under glass, rolling papers and hemp and CBD, waiting for a resolution to appear out of thin air here, which it almost doesn't seem like we're going to end up with some sort of resolution with card.

But as for me, I know, I don't know how many other representatives or other people here, applicants or licensees are from the city of Yonkers. I know myself that I can't find anyone else. So I know I'm standing

here alone right now as a representative representing myself. I have a lawyer as well. But the third largest city in the state is doing nothing. Absolutely nothing. I've had a store open for two years where I have almost 4,000 customers signed in a petition that want us licensed to be able to bring legal product to the table for them to purchase.

This is egregious by the state that this has gone on this far. The amount of money that I've put in as a, as a, I'm a legal retail business owner, which I've then converted to hemp CBD to follow all the regulations and requirements that you asked for. And I am still just an applicant and I still not received resolution. I spoke with officer James Lawson three days before the injunction went in place and was told my application would be cleared and it's still not cleared.

You know what I mean? We're talking about the third largest city in the state, which is parallel to the five burrows that make up New York. And this is to me, I have a farms that we're working with that are distressed farmers that we're trying to give them an opportunity to try to set something up with a place that is willing to work with craft growers and smaller based farmers that are here that are licensed within the state. Thank you, Mr. Gregor. Thank you. I greatly take the state. I take OCLCCB and all the representatives that are here. Keep showing your support.

Thank you. We're going to follow with Zach Sarkees, Nick Farah and Mary Kruger. Well, thank you very much. I think it's important to start with thanks. It's an insurmountable effort that has been taken on to bring this to reality.

My name is Zach Sarkees. I'm a small business owner. I'm a partner on an AUCC, small family and friend run business.

I am an educator. I'm a consumer. For the past four years since the very first hemp regs were published, I've read every single line live stream to the public to help educate and engage.

This past revision and what has been passed was the first time we did not do that. I also won't forget how the last regs were passed during holiday season. We still got 3,500 comments together.

The blanket copy and paste statements in response to so many important critical analysis of this document that was just passed, just swipe to the side.

400 comments in this last comment period. Why would I comment if OCM staff members, board members are coming out the gate before the regs are even proposed, we will not change these regs again. What are in those regs and why not? Who are the other stakeholders at hand? We know. We can read the lawsuits. We can see that. I'm going to pivot over to solutions because I really appreciate that and God willing we can come up with some solutions. I've been saying this as a broken record. We got to keep moving forward. We got to be prepared.

I think pairing off of some of the Jeff Jones comments about the initiatives, local libraries, incubators, these things that are turnkey that we can empower our local regional community members to tap in.

Without that kind of focused effort, I wouldn't recommend anyone in this bait and switch because there is no generational wealth when this is just a lost leader. This is just a bleed out. It is watching these RO's getting shooed in without what? No permission? No licensing? They get in by shooing? That's a massive

concern for me. I think from a solution based standpoint, things we really need to consider. If we are thinking about success in this industry, to me it looks like codifying card. All of our card members, there is no "we are one". Us cultivators are struggling just like you guys. Without your success, we are nothing.

It looks like 5,000 mom and pop dispensaries, pop ups, on site consumption, whatever the hell it can be.

It looks like changing the MRTA to put a ban on vertical integration for massive corporation. It looks like removing the BS radius clause that will choke out the entire market, such as Long Island, which is the base of this lawsuit. It looks like dropping the potency tax for small mid-scale operators. It looks like public business incubators and institutions at local libraries. And last but not least, it looks like the fight to keep the CRTA out of our MRTA. Thank you. Thank you.

Nick Farah and then Mary Kruger.

Who knows Zach was as tall as he is.

Good afternoon, members of the board. Thank you all for your time today.

I haven't been able to attend one of these yet. I'm usually on the farm seven days a week, but it's nice to finally be face to face with the people who control the fate of myself, my family and our farm.

My name is Nick Farah. Together with my parents, we own and operate Leaning Birch Farm, a vegetable farm in Amsterdam, New York, along with our AUCC license number 302, Goldfinch Flora LLC.

I'm a member of Cannabis Farmers Alliance instead on our board and a member of New York Farm Bureau.

I want to expound on Dr. Gilbert Jenkins' concerns about RO expansion.

We know that the existing RO canopy alone is enough to saturate the adult use market.

Expanding the ROs without a plan to control their contribution to the adult use market is irresponsible.

AUCC has entered the market with the understanding that we would have a year of sales in a market with at least 100 stores before ROs were able to compete with our partners.

Not only has the state failed to materialize these outlets, but having gone a legally imperiled route and restricted from opening dozens of new stores, New York has deprived struggling cultivators like My Small Family Farm, the last opportunity we had to see our 2022 harvest moved in advance of this year's crop and RO competition.

All at the same time, seed to sale tracking requirements set to begin will amount to enormous monthly expense that far too many of us cannot currently afford.

All of these factors together are paralyzing New York's small cannabis farms and threaten to destroy livelihoods and life savings across the state.

Please act swiftly to devise a comprehensive relief package for the farms that the state's failed plan has devastated.

Thank you for your time and thank you all especially for coming out and speaking your truths today.

Thank you.

And Mary Kruger.

Mary is here.

Good afternoon and thank you for your time. I am Mary Kruger, executive director and founder of Rock Normal. We are a cannabis consumer advocacy organization who is deeply involved with the efforts to pass the MRTA. So first I want to thank you for all the work you've done to start our adult use market, your devotion to equity and repairing harms from the war on drugs. Is not overlooked and I'm here to encourage you to continue that work and delay the entry of the RO's into the adult use market and codify card. While it is exciting to pass these regulations to continue moving forward with setting up our program, we can't ignore that the RO's are set to come into this market is vertically integrated companies. The reality is there's a huge value at first mover advantage. We must hold off the expansion of the RO's into adult use as long as possible in order to truly have a chance of New York setting the gold standard for equity in adult use cannabis.

With the lawsuits filed against the card program, many of these social justice involved applicants and licensees have been harmed by the state yet again. Even though the intention of card wasn't to harm the applicants, the reality is that was the impact for so many. With the reality in front of us, we urge you to recognize your responsibility to do everything in your power to repair those harms that you have been part of causing. And one way you can do that is to delay the entry of the RO's into the adult use market until these card applicants and licensees can get open and actually get their feet on the ground.

As part of our mission as Rock Normal and in the words of Chris Alexander, we were never fighting for legalization at any means necessary. We fought for legalization rooted in justice, equity and reinvestment. We still hold these values while working to set up our market. Corporate cannabis and

RO's have never been for the community. Many of them have actually had a history of fighting against the community, lobbying against home cultivation in New York.

Several have been involved in lawsuits fighting against social equity goals in New York and other states.

I thank you for your time. I urge you to delay the RO's and codify card. Thank you very much. And I want to say thank you to everyone that took time to speak with us today to share your comments and your concerns.

And for your critical analysis of the work that we're doing and the review of what we're doing and how we're doing it and ways in which we need to improve it to better serve the people that we're here to help regulate, license and support. So I just wanted to let you know that your words are not falling on deaf ears. We do not speak during this section because it is for public comment. It is for us to hear what you have to say and then we are supposed to let that inform the work that we do. So we don't want you to think that the silence means that we're not paying attention. Most of us are taking notes. And it is something that we refer back to.

But thank you because it is important to know the wide range of issues that you're dealing with and we're trying to make sure that we roll it into the work.

That is really the end of our meeting today. I want to make a note that the time location and a livestream link will be shared on the cannabis.ny.gov in advance of our next Cannabis Control Board meeting as well as a recording of today's meeting. Meeting minutes and a transcript will be posted. But

before we formally adjourn today I'm going to ask the board if we'll take a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a specific litigation matter. Well, Fiore, the New York State Cannabis Control Board and the Coalition for Access to Regulated and Safe Cannabis, the New York State Control Board.

So moved. May I get a second? Second. All right. All in favor. We'll move into Executive Session as soon as this room is cleared. So please everyone I'm going to ask you to take all conversations into the hall immediately. Thank you.

Thank you.

She should be here by now.

Nope.