

3/22/24 CCB Meeting Transcript

Speaker 1 Well, good morning, everyone, and thank you for joining us here today. I'm Tremaine Wright, chair of the Cannabis Control Board. Please forgive us for the delay. Just to make it clear, today we are taping the meeting. There will not be a live stream. If anyone would like to view this meeting, it will be on a copy of the video. Will be online shortly after the meeting. Just to make that clear. So, welcome to Brooklyn. Sorry for the delay. And thank you all to our host today, Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Development. Recognizing that we have a majority of board members present, I'm going to call I'm pleased to call to order another meeting of the Cannabis Control board. And, I would like to also note that board member Perry is participating from a publicly accessible location in Buffalo, and board member Jennifer Gilbert Jenkins is participating from a private location due to extraordinary circumstances. Now I will go over the agenda for today's board meeting. However, before I begin, I'd like to highlight that an item that was posted yesterday has been removed. The resolution considering a registered organizations register organization non dispensing application has been removed from today's agenda. So today's agenda is as follows A welcoming opening remarks. Approval of meeting minutes from the February 16th, 2024 board meeting. Consideration of adult use cannabis licenses. Consideration of cannabis laboratory permits. Of those are all renewals. and for consideration of enforcement regulations for adoption consideration of registered organization, medical renewal, consideration of registered organization, dispensary relocations, and a consideration of a one time waiver of licensing fees for certain conditional cultivator applicant applicants. They thereafter will have the Executive Director Director's report, public comment, and then the board will adjourn. So today we were prepared to take one step further and building a market with healthy competition, ample choice and equity. Since the enactment of the MRTA, we have made significant progress toward the establishment of a comprehensive regulatory framework. Our current framework guides New York cannabis industry towards safety, equity, and sustainability. We have successfully licensed cultivators, retailers and other key industry players, all with a focus on ensuring product safety and quality for consumers. And today, we will consider over 100 applications representing cultivators, retailers, processors and microbusinesses. We're also going to consider registered operators and laboratories. We are, or we have already issued over 500 cannabis licenses in this state. Our licenses, our licensees, represent significant economic opportunities. The New York legal cannabis industry creates jobs, generates taxes and spurs innovation. Already, our Cannabis Advisory Board is determining how to reinvest tax revenue into communities that have been historically and disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition. So as we continue pushing forward in 2024, reflect on the strides we have made towards economic opportunity and social justice. I want you all to pause, to reflect on the tens of thousands of people, a fellow New Yorkers who have had marijuana related criminal records expunged. And I want you to consider all of the farmers that were able to move out from under a collapsing hemp market and who are now leaders in producing some of the best cannabis flower and products that line the shelves of our burgeoning cannabis retail landscape. However, it's not all rosy. This is difficult work. We are committed to continuous improvement and expansion of the cannabis industry in New York State. We are committed to addressing the existing challenges and ensuring the new that New York remains a leader in regulations, programs and innovation. We're committed to working with all of our stakeholders, licensees and industry players, communities and our partners in government. This is how we continue to foster a responsible, inclusive and thriving cannabis ecosystem. So now let's move on to the first item on our agenda. So our first order of business will be the review and approval of the meeting minutes from February

16th, 2020 for Cannabis Control Board meeting. May I please have a motion to consider and approve the February 16th board meeting minutes.

Speaker 2 So moved.

Speaker 1 May I have a second?

Speaker 3 Second. Second.

Speaker 1 It's been moved and properly seconded. Is there any discussion by any board member? Hearing none. I'll call for a vote. All in favor? I, I. Okay. The motion to approve the February 16th, 2024 board meeting minutes carries. For our first order of business today, let's move on to our resolutions for our first resolution today. May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2024-60. Consideration of adult use cannabis licenses. So moved. May I have a second?

Speaker 3 Second.

Speaker 1 I'll now ask our executive director provide a brief overview of the resolution.

Speaker 2 Okay, so there you go. The feedback. Oh, okay. Okay.

Speaker 4 Thank you, Madam Chair. And, welcome. Those joining us today, we are so excited to present a second cohort of adult use cannabis licenses, which have cleared the multi-step review process. From our team. I cannot thank enough, the folks on the licensing team at OCM who continue to work diligently to process these applications and communicate, with applicants about, ways to advance, their applications to licensure. We have 45 retail dispensaries in this group, 31 microbusinesses, 14 cultivators and 14 processors. If approved by the board, this will make 223 licenses issued by the board, in 2024. As many of aware, this is a complicated process that's multilayered. And for the licensees in the room, I know you can, can speak to that. But we are eager to continue to keep moving forward, to continue to issue licenses and get this market, running full steam ahead. This. Supply chain is built, and we're excited to continue to add operators to that chain.

Speaker 1 Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you Chris. Is there any discussion or questions? Sorry. Is there any discussion or questions or comments from any board members?

Speaker 3 I just want to take this second to say that I continue to get emails from people, concerned about numbers of licenses. And I just want us to clarify for the public, the, the process of continued, review of licenses and that there has been a removal of any gaps.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Chris.

Speaker 4 So just to be clear, no, we had a discussion on this last board meeting. There are no license caps, in this market, but we are very intent on growing the market responsibly. We're eager to get, these additional 114, operators, operating and, excited to continue the process and the work of issuing licenses. We have a lot more to go. And so we'll keep moving forward and have, hopefully continue a hefty batch of, licenses or applications for the board to review at the next board meeting.

Speaker 3 Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Any additional questions? Comments? Hearing none. I'll call for the vote. Doctor Gilbert Jenkins.

Speaker 3 Ate.

Speaker 1 Mr. Perry, I. Miss Knight, I. Miss Garcia, I and I vote in the affirmative. The motion to approve resolution number 2024-60. Consideration of adult use cannabis license carries. And now for our next order of business. May I please have a motion to consider? Resolution number 2024-61, consideration of cannabis laboratory permit renewals.

Speaker 3 So moved.

Speaker 1 May I have a second?

Speaker 3 Second.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Please ask our executive director provide a brief overview of this resolution.

Speaker 4 Thank you. Absolutely. Thank you, Madam Chair. We have 17, cannabis laboratories, that are permitted to operate in the state. This is a resolution to renew all of those permits. The applicants do have to pay a permit fee. That represents 1% of their gross annual receipts for the calendar year. And we're just excited to continue to to keep moving this process forward and ensuring that our labs are properly supporting the market.

Speaker 2 That's it.

Speaker 1 Okay. Thank you very much. Is there any discussion, question or comment by any of our board members? I have a question. Chair. Yes. Have there been any.

Speaker 2 Site visits.

Speaker 1 Or inspections of these.

Speaker 2 Labs?

Speaker 4 Absolutely. We do, inspect our labs. We also work pretty closely with our labs as they're troubleshooting issues.

Speaker 2 Not.

Speaker 4 All of our labs have the full spectrum of testing available. And so we're also constantly working with them to, ensure that they can perform the full swath of testing for our licensees. But it has been a growth process as we're getting more on board. And, and, you know, we're always, of course, measuring to make sure that we have enough labs to meet the demands. And as we, advance more licensees, more cultivation, more processes, we're absolutely going to have to have a future need. So, excited to also expand that part of the market.

Speaker 2 Thank you.

Speaker 1 Any additional questions? Questions or comments? Hearing none. I'll call for the vote. Doctor Gilbert Jenkins.

Speaker 3 Aye.

Speaker 1 Mr. Perry, I. Miss night, I. Miss Garcia. I and I vote in the affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution number 2024-61, consideration of cannabis laboratory testing permits. Carries. Thank you very much. Let's see our next order. May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2024-62. 2024-62 Consideration of Enforcement Regulations for adoption.

Speaker 3 So moved. Making a second.

Speaker 1 Having a motion properly approved and seconded. May I please ask Chris to please provide us an overview of the proposed enforcement regulations for adoption?

Speaker 4 Absolutely. Madam chair, this, group of these regulations, were previously in front of the board, in October. They were most recently updated, to include enforcement proceedings, related to the illicit cannabis, stores that have been going through, both our administrative process as well as, a broader, process to address that concern. I do want to just flag for, the public and for board members that we will have to come back to you. Most likely, as the state legislature is currently discussing an expansion to the office's, enforcement powers. And so should, the budget proposal that has been put forward by the governor advance? We will likely also need to update these, on an emergency basis. And so flagging that, in advance, depending on what happens at the legislative level. But these have gone through the public comment, process and are now ready for adoption.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Are there any questions or comments from the board?

Speaker 3 This is more procedural. So if the legislature, and the governor signed a law that makes the law effective immediately, does it still need to come before us for regulatory updates and go through the Sapa process?

Speaker 4 Absolutely. Yeah.

Speaker 3 So sorry. It was it was on it just I wasn't close enough. I was just asking if the law that gets passed on enforcement at the state level, if if the statute says that it's effective immediately, if it still needs to come before us and go through the traditional regulatory process of 60 day commenting period and all of that.

Speaker 4 Yeah, the law can be effective immediately, but the processes that are created by the law still need to be developed. And so, should that should the proposal, advance and become law? We'll have to update our administrative processes to capture the change, that's being proposed. And so law will be effective. Still have to pass our regulations to actually make the thing work. They will be on an emergency basis. Yeah, and it will be an emergency.

Speaker 3 What with that? Are we moving ahead with drafting those so that we are ready when that gets passed, and move this ahead as fast as possible?

Speaker 4 Yes. The office is prepared. Obviously there's still pieces that need to be worked out, but the office is prepared to advance, regulations. Emergency regulations at that time.

Speaker 3 Great.

Speaker 1 Any other discussion. I'll call for the vote. Doctor Gilbert Jenkins. I. Mr Perry. I. Miss Knight, I. Miss Garcia. I and I've only affirmative as well. Resolution. The motion to approve resolution number 2024-62, consideration of enforcement regulations for adoption carries for next order of business. May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2024-6 consideration of registered organization medical renewal.

Speaker 3 So moved.

Speaker 1 May I have a second? Second. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Please, I'll ask Chris to please provide a brief overview of this. I think I'm sorry, did I just read that incorrectly? I think I did. Okay. But but please provide an overview of this, regulation.

Speaker 4 Absolutely, madam Chair. So, this, resolution is related to the renewal of the registration of one of our, medical operators, pursuant to, section 35 of the cannabis law. Registered organizations need to update their registration every two years. This operator has, completed all requirements that are included in the regulations for renewal. And so we're advancing them at this time.

Speaker 1 Are there any questions or comments from the board? Can you please confirm? You said that they are operating. This entity had been closed for a very long time. Are you saying that they are now up running and it's current on all of their locations.

Speaker 4 Their renewal? They've met all the requirements of the regulations. I'm not going to speak to, their individual, any kind of adjustments that they're making with their business plan. But for the regulatory requirements that are in front of them, they've met those requirements. Okay.

Speaker 1 There any other questions, discussions or comments? Hearing none.

Speaker 3 I'm a little confused because Tremaine had asked the really specific question about storefronts being open, and I don't. Are you saying that those stores that are supposed to be open are open?

Speaker 4 The medical regulations do not require that a registered organization has all the facilities that they're able to operate, operating at the same time or operating, concurrently to, to, this proposal to this renewal. What it does require, though, is that they have continued to serve the patients of New York. And so them not having a particular dispensary, medical dispensary open does not impact their their renewal. What it does impact is their transition, to being an adult use, operator, which requires they have four stores open. It's a different requirement for transition to the adult use site than it is for medical renewal.

Speaker 3 I see.

Speaker 1 Jess.

Speaker 3 Oh, and I just wanted to clarify, because I do recall the regs also require that the four be operational before they can open a fifth, which is not the situation.

Speaker 4 That we which is not a situation we're dealing with. Yeah.

Speaker 3 Yep.

Speaker 1 Okay. Any additional questions or comments? Not. I'll call for the vote. Doctor. Gilbert Jenkins.

Speaker 3 Aye.

Speaker 1 Mr. Perry, I. Miss Knight. I. Miss Garcia. I and I vote in the affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution number 2024-63, consideration of registered organization medical renewal carries for our next order of business. May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2024-64 consideration of registered organization dispensary relocations. Is this working for you now okay sorry about that. So I was asking if we can please get a motion to consider resolution number 2024-64 consideration of registered organization dispensary relocations. So moved. May I get a second? Second. Okay. So this resolution would approve two dispensary relocations within the same county. The dispensary already exists in accordance with the regulations. All dispensary relocations must be approved by the board. And so therefore, they're before us. Are there any questions or comments from the board members? Okay. Hearing none, I'll call for the vote. Doctor. Gilbert Jenkins.

Speaker 3 Aye.

Speaker 1 Mr. Perry, I miss Knight. I miss Garcia.

Speaker 3 Aye.

Speaker 1 And I vote in the affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution number 2024-64, consideration of registered organizations, dispensary relocations carries for our next order of business. May I please have a motion to consider resolution number 2024-65, consideration of the waiver of licensure fees for conditional cultivators.

Speaker 3 So moved.

Speaker 1 May I have a second? Second. And I'll call on Chris to ask for a brief overview of this resolution, please.

Speaker 4 Absolutely, Madam Chair. Sorry about that. Absolutely, Madam Chair. You know, obviously, the initial growth season and, the lack of the available dispensaries, in a timely fashion, resulted in great angst in our farmer community. We were very intentional in trying to create opportunity for New York small farmers. There's obviously always the frustration of of going first. And this resolution, which is within the board powers to waive fees, would provide some semblance of relief, to the farmers, who are currently going through transitions to other license types. What is so special about New York's market is, partly that commitment to ensuring small family farms have a real, meaningful chance to participate. This, was definitely heavily supported by the Cannabis Advisory Board. Who spent a great deal of time, trying to, advance, this proposal, to the body here today.

There's going to be obviously, as farmers are currently transitioning to different license types. There's kind of a range of an impact in terms of, financial impact. And so we are still calculating what that will be as those farmers continue their transition. During the application, when and it's open right now for them. But, still, I think, absolutely in line with, board powers and would obviously create some necessary support, for our cultivators. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Are there any questions or comments from the board?

Speaker 3 So I just have one quick question. How does this impact the wave of licenses that for the asks that have transitioned in this park and, well, what are there fees that have already been paid that need to be refunded?

Speaker 4 Absolutely. Thank you. Board member Gilbert Jenkins, there are fees that have been paid. I believe, we're probably under 20, farmers who have, submitted that fee. We will be processing refunds. And for folks who are currently transitioning, folks who are in front of the board today or who just, transitioned to new licenses with the board vote today. We'll be communicating with them in the immediate future about how to proceed, without, paying that fee.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Any additional questions or comments? Hearing? None. I'll call for the vote. Doctor. Gilbert Jenkins.

Speaker 3 Aye.

Speaker 1 Mr. Perry. I. miss Knight. I miss Garcia. I and I vote in the affirmative as well. The motion to approve resolution number 2024-65. Consideration of the waiver of licensure fees for conditional cultivators carries so that. So that concludes the, the resolutions that are before the board today. And now we'll go back and ask our executive director for the executive report, please.

Speaker 4 Thank you, Madam Chair. A lot going on. So, a lengthier update than normal. I definitely want to start, with, a licensing update. Since the last board meeting we've opened, I believe, 16 dispensaries, 19 by the end of the day. Which brings that total increase, to 60 and the last 100 days. This pace is, representative of, the hard work. That's been done by our card licensees in particular, to navigate a complex regulatory framework to navigate real estate. And to, you know, really commit themselves to this work of establishing a New York's adult use, supply chain. We're really excited about the progress that's been made, by both our licensees in the market writ large. And that will just continue. And so we are excited for for the additional openings that will be coming, along in the next couple of weeks and months. I want to say a couple of notes. As it relates to those openings and as folks who are navigating this process, as you are getting ready, if you are a card licensee or one of our licensees that is currently going through the retail price, the retail licensing process. Just a reminder. To let the office know as you complete your postelection applications and to communicate with our compliance and licensing teams. Before scheduling an open date, we've had a couple of, you know, moments of confusion with licensees. We're eager to get you all open. But that lack of communication with the office that you're getting to that final stretch, can create complications. So we want to make sure that you are prioritizing as you complete your postelection application for those card folks. And go through your buildout and processes. That before scheduling an opening date. Make sure you're communicating with the office to make sure everything is lined up. Next. I want to talk. Processing of licenses. Obviously, we have a lot of applications that

came in through the December, and November windows. That processing is ongoing. This is difficult work, to be clear, for our card licensees who have gone through this process already. There's a lot of questions. And, you know, as much as folks, that frustration is, you know, justified, understand, that is intended to protect the two tier system, the two tier system that we have designed. We need to know the owners. We need to know who's participating in this license. We need to ensure that you're communicating properly with the municipality. We hope that you hope to operate in these are going to be community businesses. These are all small and family businesses. It's a beautiful thing. But that process of collecting information, of going through, that interaction with our licensing team is crucial. And so as folks continue to move forward, I just have a couple of messages. One, deficiencies I mentioned this last board meeting. You got to continue to be responsive, to the office and to not just, reaching out to myself or other members of the board or, other members of the OCM team, but specifically the licensing. And as you go through the process, the compliance team who are reaching out to you from that AU licensing, email, when you have those deficiencies occurring, you got to go back into the system to correct them, and they will instruct you to do that. Emailing, a correction, or anticipating a potential deficiency and just emailing broadly to whoever, does not get that process, keep that process on track. I want to announce something else as it relates to that, the order in which folks are appearing in the queue. I've gotten a lot of, emails and comments of folks expressing frustration, because they were, you know, number ten in the queue and they just saw number 12 and 13 get license. The order that you appear in the queue does not represent the order in which the license will be issued. This is posted all over our public documents. I'm reminding you again, every single application situation is different. Every interaction with the office. It depends on the licensee. It depends on the situation. Did we get the municipal opinion back? All of these things, become, variables, in the review and in the issuance of license, having somebody issued, that was below you in the queue does not mean you're not getting issued. It just means we were able to get through that application, quicker. Another important note as it relates to communication with the office at this point in time, as we are, you know, growing, and as our market is growing, it is impossible, for members who are not on the licensing team or not in the compliance office to ensure that every, request is being met. And that every need is being met from my licensees or our applicants. Applicants out there. Licenses out there. You need to be communicating with the licensing team. With the compliance team. I will no longer have OCM staff trying to respond and deal with questions as they come. Randomly, even at the board meetings. Even now, we're going to direct you to the licensing team. Those are the folks that you need to be communicating with to ensure that nothing is lost. You are folks are communicating and trying to send stuff along to people. A lot of we have a small team, but we're doing a big job. And so what often that means is folks are focused on other things. And so it is impossible to ensure that, those requests, those needs are fully acknowledge and tracked and kept within the system. Communicate with the licensing team, with the compliance team, depending on where you sit, in the process. I want to pause here, and, give some equity updates before, I continue with the rest of the licensing update.

Speaker 5 Thank you Chris. Good morning to the board and to everyone who's joining us today. My name is Tabitha Robinson. I'm the director of economic development. And today we are proud to share that of the 114 licenses issued, 63% are social and economic equity applicants. These sea licences for short span across six categories identified in the cannabis law. We have women owned businesses, minority owned businesses, distressed farmers service, disabled veterans, individuals from communities disproportionately impacted and those with convictions qualifying for extra priority. To be clear, we do not select applicants based on their C category. After recommending these 114 applications to

the board for licensure, we looked at the C representation amongst them and found the following. The law set a goal to award 50% of adult use licenses to C. It's worth repeating that we surpassed that goal with 63%. It's also worth noting that minority owned businesses and women owned businesses take the lead in this category, and this is the trend that we continue to see in several license types. For the Micro Business license. The law explicitly stated that we should promote C applicants, and we've managed to do so as well. 71% of today's micro business licenses are held by C applicants, and we're seeing really strong representation for the micro business license amongst our service disabled veterans, which corresponds to a lot of the operation driven intentions we heard from that community during our community roundtables. For the retail license. We also continue to see strong representation. 87% of today's retail licenses are held by C applicants. Our retail representation of minority owned businesses at 54% and women owned businesses at 36% stands high above national industry rates of 19% for minorities and 16% for women. Looking across all our licenses today, we are reminded that the state wanted us to make sure these groups were in the adult use market, and the agency is proud to say we accomplish that goal. Our path to making equity a reality was as simple as apprising all New Yorkers of the opportunity in this space. We lowered the barrier to entry by keeping fees affordable, supporting C applicants during the application process, and, crucially, demonstrating our commitment to post licensure. We will continue to support C applications alongside the agency's larger licensure effort. Applicants wishing to cure deficiencies in the C application are encouraged to reach out to our Tap program for support. We'd also like to share an update on the Cannabis Hub, an incubator or chip training and education initiative. Initial sessions in November of 2023 provided compliance training to 120 transitioning AUCCS, and AUCPS. Those sessions spotlighted issues such as GMP certification, TPI and investment, distressed farmer certification, minimal processing, and micro business transition. Last week, we launched part two of that education initiative, which consists of 18 weeks of virtual and exhaustive compliance training for over 160 licenses. The team is working alongside presenters from Cornell University, Suny Morrisville, cannabis legal and accounting professionals, and experienced cannabis business licenses to cover a range of topics relevant to all licenses. Topics include compliance overview, regulations overview, cannabis business accounting and capital raises, GMP's track and trace, environmental controls, sustainability and more. The C team expanded the targeted audience to include all approved transitioning licenses AUCCS, AUCPS, as well as Card and new licenses in order to establish a deeper learning of compliance rules and regulations for all license types. The goal of these efforts is to build a pipeline. We started with outreach and technical assistance for the application. Today I spoke about our C licensing numbers. We also want to make sure that businesses are successful, that once they operate begin operating, they remain in operation. And our Chip training and education initiative speaks to that. We are one step closer to building the nation's largest market and making sure that it is both built on principles of fairness and small business. Thank you Chris.

Speaker 4 Thank you so much, Tabitha and the entire team that's working to ensure that these small businesses are successful. Which brings me to the next item, an update. The delinquent payment reporting, process. And so we're supply chain, beginning of the chain impacts the end. We now have retailers operating throughout the state. We have processes, we have cultivators. We need to ensure that that supply chain is protected. And so the regulatory regulations require that we implement a delinquent payment process. This is familiar for folks, who have, you know, and similar to the alcohol industry, it's the same, approach that ensures, that folks are paying their bills on time. We want to make sure every aspect of the supply chain, is running efficiently. And so retailers, who are beyond their 30 days of, of credit, need to ensure they're making payments timely. If they

continue to fail to make those payments timely, they will be posted, on a delinquent, a delinquent, payee list that'll be accessible by our, suppliers. And those retailers will then have to pay cash on delivery. All right. And so the goal of this, again, is to ensure that supply chain is functioning. I know that folks and processors and operators of well have extended time frames for the collection of payment, in an effort to support retailers getting up and going. And that is appreciated at the same time. Now, as we continue to grow and evolve, as an industry, we need to ensure, that we're operating, tightly. And so the COD list is going to go live in April. Instruction to our retailers, connect with your suppliers, ensure that you've, you know, submitted payments that needed to be submitted. And, of course, to our suppliers, ensure that you're working collaboratively with our retailers to ensure that they're doing so. This list is going to be updated weekly. And so our suppliers will be checking in. And they do have a mandate to report when payment has not been made. And so information on this went out to everybody in the supply chain. But you can learn more of course. on the website. All right. Next one. Sorry. It's a long one. Yeah. My bet. The map, the map. And so folks, probably also notice this week, particularly folks on the retail side, that we rolled out a map of protected locations. And I know this is something that, folks have been asking for for a time, and the offices is really excited to be able to announce and identify locations that are in process. As you can see on the map. And when you go to use the tool, you'll identify locations that are currently open and operational, as well as locations, that are, being proposed. And so those locations are being proposed. Our folks, may represent folks that are, card licensees or folks, who had locations that, were viable. And so they have been protected. The yellow dots can change. And so all this language is on the is on the site, but the yellow dots can change. These location protections run separate, from the application process. And so in the case that an applicant, becomes or is identified as ineligible, that location protection will cease, to continue. And so we're going to be, trying to update this every two weeks. We'll try to move faster, by folks need to check this site before, proposing a location before signing a lease, or a conditional lease, which is allowed. You don't have to sign a full lease. We offset separate conditional use to demonstrate site control. But check this site. Check the map, check the list. Check the addresses, before continuing to progress to securing a location. As you interact with the office and submit locations, reminder location submissions happen through the post selection application. You cannot just email us an address and say, I want this, location. Go through your post selection application. There's a section where you submit the address that you hope to operate from, and then we will, process it, if it is, again, a viable location. If you are somebody who has applied and you don't see your location on the map, that does not mean that you're not going to get a license. It may mean that your location is not viable, but it is a case by case basis, depending on the situation. If you're too close, obviously, to a, house of worship or school, that location, obviously not viable, will not appear, on the map.

Speaker 2 Okay.

Speaker 4 And then I think the last couple of notes, on applications and licensure is just to flag again to our cultivators and processors. That the application submission, for your transition to either a micro another license type is now open. We are asking folks to submit, by May 3rd. A reminder again, I've said this the last three board meetings. The conditional cultivate a conditional process authorization expires in June. That's it. And so you've got to get the transition, done before then, as Tabitha just spoke to, the team has been doing a lot of training and preparation of our cultivators and process to do that transition. But I am absolutely aware that folks are still figuring out the business plans, figuring out what's gonna work for them before making that transition. Do not wait any longer. The application process is open. The application windows open. Please submit

before May 3rd. I want to flag as well a processor type three application, which the board approved last meeting and that application being reopened. We are working to, to get that open and to provide a final date. That announcement will be made, via, our website, our social media platforms, etc., in the coming days. All right. That's it. On licensing. Couple of other things I want to just as we as a cannabis community, continue this work of ensuring that New York has the most, diverse and equitable marketplace. That we also acknowledge that OCM, is a regulatory body. We engage in regular regulatory activity. I have the utmost confidence in our team, and particularly our compliance team and the work that they do to ensure that products that are being, produced in the state are compliant with all requirements. That testing is completed and that the products are, ready for consumers. This activity is required by law, as required by our regulations, and our team takes it with the utmost seriousness. That activity. And so I just want to remind folks, you know, whether you're a retailer getting ready to open, we have regulations that need to be met. We have rules that need to be met, whether you're a processor trying to produce product. We have rules that need to be met. Every single one of our licensees gets inspected, and we are pushing to ensure that everybody remains in compliance. It is a regular activity that folks are not. And we work with you all to correct, those issues. Now. John, I call you up to do, market update. Thank you.

Speaker 3 Hey, Chris, before we move on to John, can I ask you two quick questions?

Speaker 4 Sure thing.

Speaker 3 I was just curious. Do we have an idea how many are on that delinquent payment list as of now? You know what proportion of our, stores are delinquent in paying their suppliers?

Speaker 4 We do not know. At this time. As you know, the, the delinquent payments list requires reporting, from the cultivators suppliers. So we won't know until, those reports are made, and so. Not sure. But but we will see in the coming weeks and days as reports start being made.

Speaker 3 Okay. And then my second, question or more of a comment was that you quickly said that people don't need to have a lease, they just need to have a conditional lease. Can you just clarify that?

Speaker 4 Absolutely. And so in the regulations and the FAQ and then instructions around the application process, for for the different license types, the law requires site control. Site control is demonstrated through a lease, a deed or a conditional lease acknowledging that not all locations are viable. Not all locations, will be, you know, approved. The office allows a conditional lease where terms are spelled out, but that they may not need to be that long term commitment to demonstrate that site control.

Speaker 3 Thank you very much. All right.

Speaker 6 Thank you Chris. Thank you all for being here. The theme for this board meetings market update is velocity. So, so far this year, we have sold \$77 million worth of cannabis, which is already half of what was sold in all of 2023. The program, since the first sales began at Housing Works at the end of 2022, has generated \$237 million and rising quickly. So first couple of weeks, of March, which is which we have data through. We had \$24 million already. And, based on the momentum that we are seeing as new stores are opening, these numbers are rising very, very quickly. I think there's a beginning of, Chris's

update. He said 60 stores have opened in the 100 days since, the injunction has been lifted. I think that's an extraordinary reflection of the momentum that we are seeing to get new stores open, to get consumer sales happening, and to expand the access for consumers across the state of New York to, legal, regulated product. Next slide. You do see cyclical in the monthly data because some months will have five weeks or five reporting weeks. Some months will have four reporting weeks. And so that dynamism actually, to me masks the almost linear growth that we are seeing on a weekly basis. We are now at eight. We've now crossed the threshold of \$8 million per week in sales and rising quickly. And I think this chart beautifully illustrates how straight line, this growth is, is, accelerating at the rate that we are going, with the number of stores we have open, with the number of stores that we have lined up to open, and with the number of licenses we have now issued, we expect the velocity that we are seeing these new store openings to sustain well into Q3, and into the summer. Looks like. New York consumers are now purchasing roughly 200,000 units of cannabis products. Our splits remain the same. Consumer purchasing actually has been, extraordinarily stable. So we're seeing roughly half of our products be flower and pre-rolls. The balance being, about a quarter of edibles, 20% of concentrate on vapes. And that proportion has remained fairly consistent, for, the last eight months or so. So even as the number of stores are opening and even as a product diversity increases, we are seeing relative stability in the in the purchasing behavior of our consumers. Which is a good indicator that we're starting to see some emerging maturity, even in this young market, some emerging stability in this young market. And so given the fact that we are. Next slide please. Given the fact that we are selling 200,000 units of products a week. One of the questions we've been getting is, is there enough, capacity? Do you have enough inventory to continue to supply these retailers, given how many new stores are going to be coming online? And, based on, our serving of our producers at the beginning of the beginning of the year. Late survey, late January survey, we found that, between our cultivators and our processors were currently sitting on, roughly 4 million units of cannabis products. We've sold 1.6 million so far this year. 800,000 units of flower, 1.65 million of pre-rolls, and 1.4 of value added products. So edibles, beverages, the concentrates, etc.. So our supplies are ready to, to, to serve this market. But I would offer a caution, particularly to the licensees, the retailers who are who are opening the stores at this point. Be measured in how much you are ordering on day one. You can always restock, but you don't want to overbuy. Before you understand what the purchasing dynamics are going to be in your specific neighborhood. The statewide trends may not be necessarily reflective of the consumer trends in your given neighborhood. And the profile of consumers that you're going to be attracting. So rather than cast the net both wide and deep and end up having inventory that may not be perfectly aligned with the consumers you're serving. Starting to go slow, like we tell our consumers, figure out what is working well in the ecosystem that you're in, and then you can scale up your inventory servicing. Our cultivators, our processors are keen to work with you to ensure that the balance of your of your product inventories managed well, they will come and be delivered to you. And particularly now that we have the Cod lists, you don't want to be stuck holding inventory that that isn't moving. So focus on starting low and going slow and then, aligning the the inventory that you're carrying. Once you have a better understanding of what the needs in your specific community are going to be. And final slide. I do want to revisit the map that Chris talked about for a couple of reasons. Again, in the spirit of velocity. We understand that finding locations was particularly challenging when you didn't know what was on the map. The production of this map and on maintenance of it as new locations are being added or removed, I think will, dramatically accelerate the efficiency with which, licensees can find locations and secure locations. I will stress, again, you do not have to get, a list before you submit it to the office. We actually urge you to first confirm that the location is available before you

execute any deals and to secure conditionals. As a way of managing, your, your risk, because this map is going to be dynamic, even if we will continue to update it on a regular on a regular basis. Two we have over 650 locations now protected on this map. This is, a critical step, a milestone step in, determining and establishing what the future of retail in New York is going to look like. We have over 240 locations, protected in Manhattan in the boroughs. We have the balance over 450 protected, in the rest of the state. And so this tells us what retail is starting to look like. What what the retail footprint for, our operators is going to look like, where access is about to expand significantly. And at the rate that we are issuing these licenses, we expect this, these stores to operationalize in the coming months. And I raise that point, particularly now that we have a much clearer, illustration of what the map is looking like. To, to caution against some of the calls we've heard around, bringing down the distancing requirements, in jurisdictions where there's, where, where retail locations might be a little more difficult to come by. And part of the reason why we urge that caution is most of these stores haven't even gotten open yet, but we don't yet know what the competitive dynamics are going to be in these jurisdictions. We don't have a we don't, we have not given these operators a chance to establish their, their operations and determine. But the nature of the kinds that they're going to be serving in their respective communities, making such material changes to the, the both the regulatory structure of this market as well as to the competitive dynamics of this market this early, may lead to unintended outcomes. And it's worth noting that, changes particularly to the rules around distances, cannot be undone. Once you've allowed retailers to become more closely co-located. You can't, then make those changes. So we now know what the market is looking like. We see the velocity with which licenses are being issued in-store. Storefronts are getting open. The the opportunity for this market to get established for our retailers. To, to build and build quickly, I think is absolutely critical. Before we start making significant changes that would, impact the competitive dynamics in this market. We want to ensure these licenses are sustainable. We have seen the impact of over licensing other jurisdictions and what it has meant for, the sustainability, and the viability of licenses, maybe not necessarily in year 1 or 2, but you do start to see those impacts, materially manifest in year three, four and five. And so let the market grow that these operators get established. And, we're very, very excited to see the the continued velocity that, has been established here with, with the licensing of 114 operators today.

Speaker 4 So. Thank you John. Thank you John. I've got two more quick ones. The first, of course. We are continuing to grow as a team. We continue to grow, as as a community. I want to welcome, OCMs new chief of staff Nicole Triplett, to the team. Nicole is an accomplished attorney and advocate, and policy expert, has worked, in the spaces of technology and the intersection of, the technology, space and racial equity. And so, excited to have her join and lend her expertise. As as we close, I want to thank the chair, for recognizing where we stand today. Just shy of the three year anniversary of the passage of the MRTA. This has been a journey.

Speaker 2 Quite a journey.

Speaker 4 And, you know, at the at one of our previous board meetings, one of our licensees, who was awarded one of our car licenses, made the statement, that she couldn't believe, that New York was doing, what it said it would do. That remains the commitment. We are going to continue to do what we said we would do. Three years ago, as the bill passed it, it felt, kind of anticlimactic. We were in the middle of of Covid and, you know, the full community of of folks who work to ensure that this opportunity was created. You know, folks going to be there. And so, you know, it it really, was not representative of the momentum using John's word, and the work and the energy that had been put in to get

to that point. But as we sat at that point, you know, folks were excited of what was to come. Some celebrating what had just passed. For me, it was it was kind of an interesting, combination of the two. Now, as I sit here, after, as the chair acknowledged, the creation of expungement in the state of New York came from from the advocacy around this law. 400,000. 400,000 convictions expunged because of the effort to create marijuana justice in New York. That's incredible. And that was the that was the that was the push, right? Ensuring that, a law that was was being applied unequally. That there was some, sense of, of equity and justice. That was brought to bear. Now, as we sit three years from the passage of the law and, so many more years, from the start of this, I am so encouraged and excited by you all joining this effort. This only works when we stay as a community. The retailers, the suppliers, the small farmers. This is the story. And so I want to just leave with an optimistic note, because I'm so optimistic about what we have, next to do. As John said, we see what is rolling out. And, you know, sometimes it's hard to see it, but you'll see it in a couple of months. But I'm so optimistic about, New York cannabis. We are doing something differently. We are doing something that's never been done, and so it's hard. But you all, I have been incredible partners in doing this, and I want to thank the board. I want to thank, of course, our legislative, champions, Liz Krueger and and and Crystal people. Stokes. I want to thank the governor, for creating the space for this to exist. But mostly, I want to thank you all, and I wanna thank the OCM team. This is an important marker. This is an important marker, in our in our in our market and our industry as we continue to grow and transform. And these folks at this office have been working so diligently to bring this vision to life. And so I want to salute them today, for carrying on the baton. You know, now in year three, a post legalization and really year two of the office were just. So I'm so excited about what's next to come. So I just want to make sure y'all, I feel that joy that you all felt the day of legalization. We are doing what we said we would do and we're gonna continue to do it. So thank you.

Speaker 1 So thank you, Chris, John and Tabitha for your presentations for our next order of business. We're going to move on to our public comments. So I am going to invite the public to come up. I believe many of you have already signed up over 30 of you. So please recall, we are not answering questions. We welcome your comments. And everyone will be limited to two minutes. May I ask, where is the microphone? The microphone is in this corner. And where's the timekeeper?

Speaker 3 Madam Chair, while we wait for the logistics, I just want to. Excuse my. For another meeting, but be assured that I look forward to reading and seeing the video of your comments, and we always welcome your emails as well. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you.

Speaker 3 And I just want to note that I have a hard out at 1230 as well.

Speaker 1 And thank you, Doctor Gilbert Jenkins. Again, may I ask where is this?

Unidentified And keep that in mind.

Speaker 1 We're going to ask everyone that's called to speak, to come to this corner over here by the television to speak, and we're going to ask that the timekeeper come here into the middle so that they can see the time as they're speaking to the public. The first people you're not able to hear. Okay. Thank you. So. As we begin, we're going to be led by David Feder, followed by Jeff Hoffman and then Kevin Comecar haymaker. So we're just going to

ask people to kind of make their way up here. So they were not waiting for you to get to the microphone. David. Jeffrey then

Speaker 2 Kevin I just don't know.

Speaker 1 If somebody can stand just somewhere here so that they can see, you know, the speaker can stand over there, please. And the timekeeper somewhere over here so that they can see you because they'll be speaking out. Thank you. Perfect. We're just sitting in a great space. If you're the timekeeper and I know that's behind him, I speak specifically on that side. Sometimes they cannot see the person. So if you can take the seat that John was in.

Speaker 2 You could.

Speaker 3 or.

Speaker 1 That's it. David. Please.

Speaker 2 Good morning everybody. Congratulations to all the winners and to all those who are will be winners. And thank you very much to the Cannabis Control Board for all the work you are doing. I know it's an incredible amount of work to be done. And, everybody has expectations and everybody wants a license and hopefully we all will get our chance. We have, we have some issues that obviously have been made transparent by a lot of, you know, lawsuits and things like that. Amongst the things that I want just bring up to the board is, some concerns that we have from clients is that they apply for a license, as this is well known, people apply for licenses not knowing that there were dispensaries, nearby, and they got zoned out. Unfortunately, in some of these instances, people spent, like, a lot of money, with the anticipation that there would be no dispensaries nearby them. And we know that the board has the ability to do waivers of the thousand foot requirements. And I would I would hope that in certain instances, I guess in the instances where it justifies it, maybe even with the community board would vote for it or something in those lines that if they would say, hey, we could support more than one dispensary in the area, that maybe there should be a justification of a waiver of the thousand foot requirement in those particular instances. Any of this can be a general rule, but, but I think that perhaps on a case by case basis, it should be considered. Again, I really appreciate all you guys are doing. I know there's a lot of complaints that you may have gotten already, and you guys are great. Thank you for all the work you're doing. Please keep it up. Thank you so.

Speaker 1 Much. Thank you.

Speaker 2 Congratulations, everybody.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Jeff Hoffman, followed by Kevin Camacker. Then Josh, Eli, Eli and messing that up. Sorry, but Jeff.

Speaker 2 Thank you. Good morning. My name is Jeffrey Hoffman. I'm an attorney here in New York City. Got a bunch of cannabis clients, some of whom you've given licenses to today. Thank you on behalf of them for doing that. As Mr. Alexander mentioned, the expungement part of the law is a tremendously critical part. The conservative judges in the state of New York are not following the law for that expungement for the high level cannabis offenses. Mr.. Hugh here had a case related to that in a second department. I

have one in the third department. We're going to need your assistance in getting that right. The conservative judges in the state are not doing it right. We do have some concerns related to some things that are going on, particularly on Long Island. I mentioned this at the previous meeting. We are waiting on your opinion letter on what the communities on Long Island are doing wrong as far as their zoning. We are going to sue them as soon as you release that letter. My understanding is we've been waiting for that from you since October. Let's get that out there as quickly as possible, because we're going to sue them. You've got 60 some odd cards that are never going to be able to open on Long Island. If we don't do that. So we got to get it on. Additionally, we're talking about this map. I have a lot of clients that are on the map that are just a little bit confused about kind of where their positions are. I know it's difficult to communicate with them. I know the communication is always challenging. I would just encourage you to continue to try to communicate. We have folks that even think there may be something wrong with their applications. They're not able to get up with you seeing on the map. It would just be great if you had a little bit better of an account management process such that, you know, if you got 400 cards, you get ten account managers, they each get 40 cards, and that's the only person the card ever talks to at the office. They don't bombard your general emails, they don't go off to other places. They don't talk to people they shouldn't be talking to. If we can get some kind of process like that in place, I think that that will save a tremendous amount of the issues that you're having, one point of contact for your licensees, for your applicants, so that they can really figure out what's going on. And that won't overwhelm you with communication internally in the office. And I think that's the biggest complaint. My complaint my clients have across the board is the ability to communicate with you on that front. Thank you very.

Speaker 1 Much. Thank you Kevin, followed by Josh and then Iris Lado.

Speaker 2 Hello, everybody. Thank you, control board for letting me speak. I am a applicant in the summer queue. I have friends here today. We were granted the license. I wanted to congratulate everybody here today who did get a license. Provisional or not. It's been a long journey. I'll see them again. You guys doing an excellent job. There's obviously many bumps along the road we're here with that. One main concern I have is the proximity protection map. If there's a way that you guys can really look into the leases, there are a lot of locations on this map that do not have control over these locations, and they are holding people that I know and myself back from possibly gaining. Location near that location. And we can't because there's proximity protection. I don't know the process that you guys are going through to check the legitimacy of these leases or the control, but that is a huge, huge, huge impact because it's going to slow everybody down. Besides that, good luck to everybody. And, thank you again.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Josh followed by Iris, then Tiffany Stoker. Josh. Thanks.

Speaker 2 Thank you. Just wanted to thank, doctor, Jenkins for clearing up the, cap issue. I know I was very concerned about that. I'd like to bring the attention to several important.

Speaker 6 Points regarding.

Speaker 2 The ongoing license process. We were told to expect expedited review by 1218, with applicants with compliant spaces receiving proximity protection as they work towards a final license. It is now 3/22, and we have observed these things that are clearly not consistent with the statement not being followed, people getting extra time to cure efficiencies, people without retail getting license.

Speaker 6 From priority.

Speaker 2 Queue, improperly zoned locations, getting proximity protection. Please live up to what you told us you would do before we started, bleeding, started bleeding money for.

Speaker 6 This.

Speaker 2 Opportunity and to join the industry. Get back to FAQ 91. That is the, work shows that, despite initial intentions for the November Q to be exclusively for applicants with secured retail locations, their delays in reviewing these applications with provisional and micro licenses being issued without retail in place. That raises the question about how the queue was formed in the first place. Three concerns have been raised about the allocation of application fees. Is there there is only a fraction of the collected funds seems to be dedicated to application review. With the limited number of staff assigned to this task, it's essential to ensure transparency in the use of these funds. Additionally, the licensing telling tally provided indicates a deviation from the linear progression through the application queue, suggesting that some applicants are given more time to address deficiencies. Lastly, statements made regarding the intention to avoid creating scarcity with licenses seems contradictory given the observed trends. Furthermore, conflicting information regarding the review process merit based nature calls for clarity consistent in policy enforcement. Thank you for your attention to these matters, and I.

Speaker 6 Encourage open dialogue.

Speaker 2 To address these concerns efficiently. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. We're going to be followed by Iris, then Tiffany Stoker, then Walter. And I know I missed your name up all the time. Uatu.

Speaker 3 Thank you all for your time. The opportunity to address the board today. I appreciate all of the difficult work that you've been doing. My name is Iris Liddell, owner of Buzzy New York. I'm a C retail applicant and licensee. Hopeful. I want to share my experience in the hope that it could help inform ways to streamline the application assessment process moving forward. Buzzy New York is minority and woman owned. We signed a commercial lease in my community in Brooklyn. We've secured cannabis compliant banking. Unanimous support from our community board, a labor peace agreement, and endorsement from local 338. We completed all required application documents, fees and fingerprinting. We are fully funded and business ready. Our application fulfills the state's social and economic equity objectives and criteria established by OCM for priority licensure. Our application has yet to be reviewed and there is no timeline on when that might happen. We follow the guidelines of the state to the letter. Understanding the applicants for the retail space lease would be processed as part of a priority round. The lottery system placed us towards the back of the queue behind over 250 non C applicants. We're paying rent on an empty commercial space in Brooklyn, while thousands of illicit smoke shops operate across the state. In fact, within just five blocks of our proposed location, there are 12 shops openly selling illicit cannabis. Our team embodies the equity policies the MRTA established, where business ready, and can help OCM achieve its goal of a sustainable, legal, regulated market. We are patiently awaiting review of our application to close the gap between the high number of licenses awarded and the comparatively low number of dispensaries open. I hope you will consider elevating the applications of C applicants who are ready to open. We understand the challenges that you have faced and the enormity of the task ahead of you, and we really appreciate all of

the hard work. We hope that sharing our experience will help inform those recommendations. Thank you. Congratulations to all who received a license. And best of luck to everyone still waiting.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Tiffany followed by Walter, then Sophia martell. Good afternoon everyone. My name is Tiffany Stoker. I'm the executive director of the New York County Business Chamber of Commerce. I'm going to be brief. I'm basically just here to thank the OCM for the work that they continue to do in the heart of what they have done, because this is a very challenging, challenging process. I just want to encourage everyone to be vigilant, but be patient. As we know, social equity is something that is challenged.

Speaker 2 So often.

Speaker 1 Which is why this has probably been.

Speaker 2 As challenging.

Speaker 1 As it has been. We are a resource. Please come visit me at Harlem anytime. We want to be a connector to the legislature as well as the, folks at the ocean. Many questions and things that we can help with to guide you along the process, whether it be education workshops, just to discuss how tough this process is.

Speaker 2 Mental.

Speaker 4 Mental, state.

Speaker 1 Capabilities are very important. But just, you know, that know that we are here, to.

Speaker 2 Guide you along and.

Speaker 1 To assist in any way.

Speaker 2 Possible.

Speaker 1 So everyone just stay strong, stay together, and, you know, push for it. Thank you. Thank you. So we have, Walter, followed by Sophia, and then. I'm sorry, dispensary master hue. Please.

Speaker 7 Hello. I want to thank the board and staff working on all these applications. I'm sure it's a monumental task. Let me go back to using AI to help in distributing information following their Jeffrey's suggestion. I'm sure it's to work something in when they access your database and provide the information to individual vendors. The only thing I see they would have to get a password to access their information and ask a, where's my staff's? Thank you again and congratulations to the people who got licenses today. Keep going.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Sophia, followed by our dispensary master.

Speaker 2 And then.

Speaker 1 Matt Robinson.

Speaker 8 My name is Sophia Mortel. I am a card professional licensee and the co-owner of Purple Plains. I received my provisional license on May 11th, 2023. My partners and I promptly submitted the second part of the application, signed the lease, and began taking all steps necessary to prepare our store for opening. In this process, we have invested over \$400,000 to date. We do not have a big investor. This money has come from our friends and our family's retirement funds. We received our final inspection nearly three months ago on January 8th. We were told that we have zero deficiencies with compliance and zero deficiencies with licensing. So what is the holdup? Since our final inspection, we have spent over \$50,000 in rent and expenses. I have emailed AU licensing countless times only to get no reply. I have called the OCM Daily where they repeatedly tell me to be patient and check my email. Unfortunately, we can no longer afford to be patient. Literally, we cannot afford to pay \$20,000 in rent on the first of next month. If we do not receive our final license before April 1st, 2024, we will go bankrupt. We will default on our lease, we will be evicted from our building, and we will have to tear out showcases, custom built counters, furnishings, vaults and offices. We will have to turn down employees who are eager to work. We will have to turn away customers who are constantly asking us when we are opening. You sit here today giving out all these licenses. Why don't you first finish what you started? Finish out the Card program. License the people who have finished buildings, no deficiencies and completed inspections that you've decided to abandon. This is unethical. And what has been a lifetime dream of mine has now become a nightmare.

Speaker 2 Amen. That's right.

Unidentified Let them open, let them open.

Speaker 2 Let them know that that is a long time. All right. Guys, please.

Speaker 4 Please. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Yes. Go ahead. Sorry.

Speaker 2 Go, please. Thank you so much for giving me a few minutes. I just want to be brief. You just have two things to say. I you know, I'm so happy to be operating the lights, especially right now. I'm so proud. I paid over \$66,000 in taxes to really support this program. Is regulated industry. We have employees, and I'm so proud are incredibly diverse. Come from such rich backgrounds, and we're able to work with other vendors that are growing. What I read in your times last week was that OCM only had 32 application staff. I know when I was waiting, I was certainly very anxious and sort of really calling them sort of like, hey, why can't I join the club? But what I realized is like 32 people really aren't that many. There are thousands of applications out there. So really, I want to say thank you so much to Chris. Really. Light defeat under fire and really maximizing the use of all our staff to really address our licensing needs. So really, thank you so much for OCM for really putting attention to all license applications and really addressing them as soon as they can. The last thing I want to say is that Damian Fagan true, true, true champion for social equity for all of us. Damian, his work, I know, imagine how hard we've all been working to open our stores. He's literally been there with us. You know, he's been going out, speaking, spreading truth and trying to really, get people to honest, you know, come to come to Jesus moment. What can we really expect? So, I hope that OCM can really continue this, open conversation for a lot of licensees. And we really bring back Damien's really championed social justice, economic equity for all of us. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Matt Robinson, followed by Vinny Pazuello and then Chris Ham.

Speaker 6 Hello, everyone. My name is Matthew Robinson.

Speaker 2 I'm a New.

Speaker 6 York State license.

Speaker 2 Operating owner.

Speaker 6 I own legacy dispensary. And first and foremost, I would like to.

Speaker 2 Congratulate.

Speaker 6 All the new.

Speaker 2 Licenses and.

Speaker 6 Licenses that were given out today. Thank you to the OCM for everybody that you gave a license to today. Second, I would like to thank the the board themselves for all the hard work you've put in or the OCM staff members. Thank you all. It's a very hard job what they do.

Speaker 2 I really don't think people take and understand. People don't really understand.

Speaker 6 What they're doing, how hard it is when everybody is.

Speaker 2 Pressing on you. Everybody look at all of us in this room.

Speaker 6 Everybody here is pressing them.

Speaker 2 Not giving them any consideration of consideration. Have consideration. But then.

Speaker 6 Once we open this.

Speaker 2 Fast, it doesn't happen. Like it took me almost 18 months.

Speaker 6 To get open.

Speaker 2 Get it take a couple weeks. This is a year and a half. So I want to thank you and everybody should be thanking them for doing this.

Speaker 6 They didn't have to do this.

Speaker 2 They could let anybody do this. They took social equity in just.

Speaker 6 Involved and put them first, put them at the.

Speaker 2 Forefront. They gave me. They gave me a careful projects back in Albany, New York.

Speaker 6 An opportunity for for future.

Speaker 2 My son, my family. I employ staff, I'm put up to 40 employees under my company at one time at a point. I'm generally tax.

Speaker 6 Dollars and I couldn't have done this without.

Speaker 2 Them. We can't do this without them. To show respect for those that aren't showing respect. Pay homage. I'll give you guys your flowers.

Speaker 1 Now we give you flowers now.

Speaker 2 Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Vinny Pasulo, followed by Chris Ham, then Darren Hudson. Vinnie. Once. Is there any here? Okay, we're skipping Vinnie. Chris Ham, followed by Darren Hudson.

Speaker 2 By.

Speaker 1 Is there a Chris Ham in here? No. Okay. Darren Hudson, you're not. You declined. I'm sorry. Okay. I thought he was saying. I'm saying goodbye. I'm sorry. That's what I heard. Sasha. Sasha not get met. Gent. Nugent. Sorry I messed that up. Sasha. Followed by Jim maroon and then Bruce Sterman.

Speaker 5 Good morning. My name is Sasha Nugent, and I probably serve as director of cannabis retail at Housing Works Cannabis Co.

Speaker 3 An integral part.

Speaker 5 Of Housing Works, a community dedicated to supporting individuals living with and affected by HIV, Aids and homelessness. Since our inception in 1990, we've been providing essential services to over 15,000 low income communities, including those affected by HIV, Aids, homelessness, mental health issues, and substance abuse disorders. In December 2022, we achieved a milestone by opening Housing Works Cannabis Co, New York's inaugural first legal adult use dispensary. Our venture contributes to vital services such as health care, housing and job training. We lend our support to Governor Hochul proposal to empower localities and combining UN licensed dispensaries, bolstering public safety and tax revenue.

Speaker 1 I'm very nervous, by the way.

Speaker 5 However, additional legislative measures are necessary to address systemic inequities without further criminalizing impacted communities. The ocean must collaborate with advocates, licensed dispensaries and community board. While the program faced challenges. Like in any other state rollout, the office has been a leader in ensuring the licensing of small and equity businesses. That mission cannot be changed. The 1000 foot rule outlined in the OCM Regulations for retail dispensaries or micro businesses, plays a crucial role in preventing oversaturation. While no other state has as many Bipoc owned businesses, critical challenges impeding entry into the legal market include financing real estate, sorry, financing, real estate, capacity building, training, and technical assistance. Our mission at Housing Works Cannabis is to provide education to consumers and entrepreneurs about cannabis. We have an educational model aimed to destigmatize

cannabis use and highlight its benefits. In conclusion, I urge the legislature to prioritize social equity, address regulatory gaps, and invest in comprehensive support structures to ensure the success of the equity in New York legal cannabis market.

Speaker 1 Thank you for the opportunity to talk. Thank you Jim, followed by Bruce and then Ramon Reyes. Jim, thanks.

Speaker 3 You know, I don't come out that often, but, you know, I had to first of all, I have to congratulate on all that your offices have accomplished in three years. And the three year mark doesn't even hit until March 31st. So, I want to thank you for all the work that you all have done. I want to thank you for making social equity and justice impacted, a priority, because we haven't seen it in any other state. And that many states use social equity as a buzzword during election years, but then seem to fall short when following up on those deliverables. But I see an issue that I want to, I want to express. So while the state was very aggressive in terms of the timeline. As an ancillary business owner, I recognize when, an industry has taken on too much. What does it take for you all to get, additional staffing? Because from what I've heard even earlier that you added a new chief of staff, we know when the other chief of staff left, which that was some time ago. Okay. Got it. But in order to meet the aggressive timeline that New York has set forward for all of these business owners that are waiting. The only way that can be met is if you have adequate staffing. And I don't know if that needs to come from the governor's office to help. You will add further staff so that you can review the processes, in a more timely manner. Also, there was a new, ad, advisory that was announced. I hope that doesn't prolong the process that you already have in place, because New Yorkers don't want to wait anymore. And I think it's important that, we make cannabis not only the priority during an election year, but that we make it throughout the year because the taxes that are going to be collected from this industry are supposed to be reinvested into communities, as were laid out in the MRTA. So that's, my time. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Bruce Sterman, Ramon Reyes, followed by Caitlin. Castor. Bruce. There we go.

Speaker 2 Bruce. Sterman. Unlicensed NYC. Too many unlicensed stores. Not enough licensed ones. And the public doesn't know the difference. Please take the. Licensing restrictions, the marketing restrictions and override them using your emergency powers tomorrow.

Speaker 1 Ramon Reyes, followed by Caitlin Katz, cat sitter and then author I. Abramoff. I'm sorry, I'm messing that up. So.

Speaker 2 Good morning everybody. Happy waking back, actually, because we are a bunch of potheads up in here. Yeah. Acting so like Stephanie. So crazy. I hear a lot of frustrations. I'm not here to complain. I'm not here to, like, pointing things out or any of this stuff. I'm just kind of reminding everybody that, if you're a parent like me, if you got kids, right, understand that this is a two year old that we're talking about, right? If you raise a two year old, you know that it's unpredictable. You know, they have temper tantrums. Things happen. This is a two year this is a two year old. We just became legal two years ago. Right. So it's just like I need everybody to kind of just be patient. You know, I just finally got my license in February. I've been working as hard as everybody else is and, you know, probably more so just telling everybody, just have some sort of patience. OCM as well. Have patience with us as well. And y'all have patience with them. At the end of the day, we are all here together, and I'm just hoping that this becomes and first of all, I'm a

New York super biased person, and I'm hoping that we come out better than everybody else in this country. Right. So that's going to take a lot of patience and that's it. I'm not even gonna take up too much time. Happy. Welcome back everybody.

Speaker 1 Thank you Caitlin followed by Atrhur then Anthony Gonzalez.

Speaker 2 He was so happy he took my spot. But that's. Hi. My name is Raymond Ruiz. I appreciate you guys for putting in a lot of work. And, the opportunity to put in a license, myself, me and my family have all put in licenses because we was in a queue. Felt like that we had a better chance. So thank you for taking off the cap and making us feel like we would have no chance. But another situation is I'm in a real estate entrepreneur. And because of that, I started to notice when we put up the maps and when you asked us to put in our, applications, if there was any dispensaries known and in our neighborhood or anything along those lines, there was nothing I thought, I thought I was in a jam spot and come there was hidden agendas. There's even one that's next to me that is supposed to be getting their license. But it's a house. And I'm really like us, like wondering, like, how is that even possible? And I guess it goes back to some of the statements some of the people have said before about, how are these locations being looked at? I have a \$40,000 lease. And, I'm over a half \$1 million in, and, and I would project and, I know it is a hard task. I know it's not an easy one. I respect you off putting in the work and time and efforts to make this happen. But I'm in hopes that my proximity is not going to hurt me and, in any way when it comes to these other situations. So I appreciate your time.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Excuse me, sir, what is your name? I think I got mixed up here. That's right. The. Okay. Gotcha. God damn.

Speaker 2 My name is Calen Cassidy. I run a, compliance and regulatory affairs firm dedicated to the cannabis industry. I've been part of the regulated cannabis and hemp industries here in New York since 2015. Though my family has operated in this market spanning back three decades. I listened to nearly all these meetings on my computer, but felt compelled today to come in person and speak about what I feel is an undermining of the rulemaking process. To be clear, I, like many operators here, have concerns about some of the rules and regulations governing the New York's cannabis program. But I do take issue with though, however, is a mandate. What I do not take issue with, however, is the mandate that all of us must operate within the bounds of these rules, whether they suit us or not. That is the foundation of a regulated industry. I currently work with nearly all of the largest processors in New York, and can attest that all of them have experienced enforcement actions. And while the aspects of the enforcement process can certainly be frustrating, what it is not is surprising. My firm has spent countless hours over the past several months working on corrective action plans responses to violations found during these inspections. Some of these violations are seemingly trivial and some are serious. In fact, one of my clients had the products quarantine days for the first sale because the words the letters L, O t was not put for the Latin number. We followed the process and figured it out. Based on these observations, I can tell you that the enforcement has been conducted thoroughly and equitably, though that does not certainly mean that the office has addressed every violation. Just like someone speeding to get to work does not always get pulled over. We have a responsibility, and the government has a responsibility to prioritize those harmful violations when possible. It does not mean that an office is choosing to allow wrongful behavior unilaterally, just means that they're doing their job to protect consumers and steer resources to those critical issues. What I do take issue with is any single operator choosing for themselves to operate outside the bounds of these rules, and then using the media to pressure the office for their own selective benefit. When a

person or business elects to break the rules, there are consequences. That is life. So we have a solid foundation and we're seeing wins every day. Let's continue to celebrate and work. Collaborate.

Speaker 1 Thank you.

Speaker 2 And change the rules.

Speaker 1 Arthur. Can be followed by I'm sorry before I begin to be followed by Jamal then Kate. Jamal. Pugh and Kate. Rubbery.

Speaker 2 Hi, everybody. First and foremost, I want to thank God for giving me this opportunity. I want to thank OCM. I want to thank my attorneys and the state of New York. My name is my name is Arthur Abramov. I'm a conditional adult use dispensary licensee number 772. I was granted, in June of 2022. So, as you know, it's been a long journey for me and my team. I first want to thank the OCM once again for and everyone working very hard in this industry. I know it's not easy, but this is what we're doing here now. I'm speaking here today and hope that I may receive proximate protection from my site that I submitted. I've been actively searching for a space since the junction was lifted. As soon as I was able to secure a location, I was submitted a lease through a postelection application that I was required by me to consider my location. I was informed that I would not be granted because there was a site nearby that was granted. 99 Van Damme. The proximity protection was granted to micro business applicant, who failed to notify the community board even of the application that as required, he as well as a city applicant and I'm a card holder, so I feel like I should deserve some kind of right. Additionally, I understand there's a lease in the unit which is on the fifth floor. I did my due diligence. I went to the building and it's an apartment on the fifth floor. I don't know how that works here. You know what I mean? In that case, anyone could get it. Why? I understand the ocean policy. Except leases that are factually valid. I feel the same due diligence must be required of them to do so. I hope that you consider my proximity as I truly believe in this industry. And I really want to fight. I made strides to the sanitation department at a cost shift for me. I went to the Google headquarters, will employ over 3000 employees. So I'm a face that would actually push this agenda, make more taxes, make New York stronger. So people like me are the ones who should be here, not somebody who just put up a, lease and saying, hey, I'm here. I want to follow the map I went to yesterday. Yellow dot, y'all. Dot is a running operation. I went in, the guy says, what would you like to order? I said, I want you guys on marijuana. He's not. I have a ten year lease here. So what are we really doing? You know what I mean? It's I don't think it's fair that I'm running into walls as it is. And I just feel like with my space, I should be approved.

Speaker 1 Time's up. Thank you. Thank you so.

Speaker 2 Much for your time, guys. I appreciate.

Speaker 1 Jamal, followed by Kate, followed by Nadine Davis.

Speaker 2 Good morning, everybody. Morning. First of all, I want to say, respect to doing stuff like that to the Holcim. The Microsoft respects due to the ozone. First of all, everybody else's stuff like that, the legislators that, they gave social equity a chance to, plentiful wishing. The one thing I want to say is that, you know, a lot of things are always talked about negatively when it comes to the OCM. Nothing works perfectly. I'm not saying

I don't think that I like some of the processes, but I understand that y'all doing our best. I believe that what.

Speaker 6 Happened to Damien Fagan.

Speaker 2 Was wrong. I pray that not they they just stick together as a team. Did not see this out. And fulfillment. And that when y'all do bring other people on, I'll be able to take care of issues and stuff like that that are necessary to make sure we move forward. I want to make sure I say, respect to miss Crystal people, Stokes and Moss, and I hope that, we figure this thing out.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Kate. Is Kate still here? Yeah. Okay. Please come up. Be ready. Followed by Nadine and then Alec Colby. Oh, look, if I say that name. Carl. There you are.

Speaker 8 Hi, guys. How you doing? I'm Kate Ruby. I'm a regulatory consultant. And compliance consultant. Master of public administration. I've worked with.

Speaker 1 Speaking to the make.

Speaker 8 Up. I've worked with various licensees across the supply chain to both obtain and maintain licenses in this, regulatory scheme. What I will say is, I got my, from Long Island families from Brooklyn, Queens. I'm proud to be a New Yorker. I'm proud to say that New York has stood up one of the best, probably the only real and meaningful social equity program in the country where we're giving licenses to people who have been disadvantaged. One of the primary legislative intent of this law was to repair the damage done by the war on drugs in communities disproportionately disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition and the law enforcement policies and procedures that occurred during that time. What I will say is that I worked in South Carolina for years doing regulatory policy and energy and child abuse and neglect. I ran the Senate committee that had jurisdiction over, family and veterans services, i.e. the child abuse, the neglect laws. And what I will say is that I moved back to New York when I read this law. Why? Because New York was trying to do something different. New York was trying to do something meaningful. The system is imperfect. However, the regulations are imperfect. We need to work on that. Everybody knows it's under review. I would love to, provide input on how we can revise the regulations to make the system work better, but we cannot give up on the goals of this law, because if we do, we're going to have California, where there's five companies. That's not the point of this law. The point of this law is to build generational wealth in disadvantaged communities. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Nadine. Followed by Olha Colby, followed by Pilar. Is Nadine here? Once, twice. Okay, we're skipping Nadine, Ola, Colby. And. They're not here. Pilar. She must be outside. Socking your next and then Vlad your after. Is Vlad still here? You follow Saki. Thanks. Yeah. You're now. Now.

Speaker 2 All these people.

Speaker 1 We called, they're not here. They don't get. They've missed their opportunity. All right. Good afternoon everyone. I'm Saki, co-founder of Tainted Love BK, director of events that on the Rebel and a long, long time advocate here in Bed-Stuy. Really? Usually I'm a solution oriented action person. But today I want to focus on our wins. We have 85.

Speaker 2 Speakers.

Speaker 1 I know. Give me a second. I'm trying to see and.

Speaker 2 Do this simultaneously. I know I'm taking time away too.

Speaker 1 All right. We have 85 licensed retailers operating. That's more than three quarters since the injunction is lifted. We heard that earlier today right here at Restoration Plaza. We do an event celebrating and educating. A cannabis event. Over 1000 people came here on the same day as.

Speaker 3 Afropunk.

Speaker 8 And a spike Lee event.

Speaker 1 Right? Oh, no. I lost my page. Oh, no. Oh. There is.

Speaker 2 And we're breaking stigmas.

Speaker 1 I'm killing time, too. We're breaking stigmas and building businesses. But negativity sells papers and breaks spirits.

Unidentified Right. We need to.

Speaker 1 Focus on the spirit of the law. We fought for. This is an industry with small business and equity get equal access. That means funding of course, but more so non predatory access to how the business is won. Manage expectations because this is a high risk highly regulated industry.

Speaker 2 And we have to maneuver the rugged waters of capital investment.

Speaker 1 We've had a slow start and this is the really big thing I want to say, because I'm losing time and I can't get to my notes. New York's industry has been viciously stalled by the same people who spread the narrative that New York created a broken system, and they've been allowed to monopolise other states. This is not happening here. Every small business takes five years to sink or swim. Prohibition has happened.

Speaker 2 For over.

Speaker 1 100. Can we get five to make changes? Thank you. Vlad. Followed by Oleg, Marius, and then George. Tabby.

Speaker 2 Good morning everyone. First of all.

Speaker 4 Congratulations to everybody.

Speaker 2 That won a license today. I'm Vladimir Bautista.

Speaker 4 I'm here representing Vladimir about his stock. Was awarded a license.

Speaker 2 Back in 2022, but I'm not here to promote myself. I'm here to speak.

Speaker 4 Objectively.

Speaker 2 Today and put things in perspective. So. Okay, we got some work to do. People need more resources. You need more staff. You gotta work on their list stores. And I know it's a lot, but we still got more work to do. But for the community, I speak all over the world. I'm not speaking in a vacuum. Just looking at New York. New York will be the cannabis capital of the world. New York has more black and brown and marginalized owned dispensaries than any other state. But I'm gonna tell you what's a slippery slope? A slippery slope is when you push these people to the edge, and then all of that ends up with no generational wealth, because we have to work on fixing it. But you can break it if you push too hard. If you go as far as to mess with that thousand foot protection law, it's a slippery slope and we could end up like Oklahoma. And that means that all the black and brown and marginalized people that have currently have licenses will end up with nothing. So don't get caught up with the hype. They gotta do the thing. I appreciate what you do. We all know we all have to. You have to step it up. We can help them. But don't break the program because we only be hurting ourselves. And New York is the capital of the world and will be the cannabis capital of the world. So let's fix it and not break the program. Thank you all for everything you do. I appreciate you, and let's continue working forward. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Oh, Lake, followed by George Tobbe, then Raymond Ruiz.

Speaker 2 Hi, everybody. So my name is all like, I've been in the cannabis industry here for 12 years. Legal side. And I'm excited. I'm going to be graduating with the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy. I'm going to get my master's in a medical cannabis science and therapeutics in just a few weeks. So really excited about that. I want to congratulate, all the new license holders. It's definitely a monumental day for all of you. And it's really exciting. As one of the people who, worked, to set up a licensed dispensary in Long Island City, NYC, but, I know I can tell you that what lies ahead for for you is, not not at all simple. Unfortunately, in the state, in the current state of affairs, survivability is a great challenge for license holders. Some of the things that Vladimir Battista just pointed out to, with blatant and ruthless illegal, competition in every corner that don't pay taxes. One like us, do accept credit cards and Apple Pay. You will feel your hands are tied behind your back. Implementation delays on a bio track mean that you're going to be doing a lot of manual inventory counts. And seamlessly endless spreadsheet entries. This is a this is the most diverse and equitable group of cannabis licenses. And, the ocean has responsibilities to facilitate a higher chance of success. The state government must get rid of the current the thc potency tax, which especially on products such as low and edibles. One combining two layers of cannabis tax. Consumers are paying 40% tax. Which makes it really crazy. Furthermore, we need to bring back New York cannabis. Sorry. New York hemp cannabinoid industry back to life. Local CBD consumers now rely on, unregulated products from other states that they could buy legally online. Today, as usual, I bring, research reports that indicate that, high CBD, low THC products should be primary antidote for lowering chances of cannabis use disorder, hyper meta syndrome, and schizophrenia. Thank you so much for all the work you do.

Speaker 1 George. Followed by Raymond. And then our final speaker is Osbert..... The Osbert, not Osbert. Sorry. Okay. Your last as. Okay, we got George, then. Raymond. Is George here? George. Your George okay. Is Raymond here? No, Raymond. So, Osbert, you'll be right after George. Thanks.

Speaker 6 Hello. Good afternoon. At this point, everyone.

Speaker 2 My name is George Tabby, MD.

Speaker 4 Representing common courtesy.

Speaker 2 And paint puff in peace. And I'm just happy you all here to.

Speaker 4 Support what this Cod license program has been able to do. And I just think everybody's.

Speaker 2 Been involved and everybody's, you know, continuing this fight, making sure that we have, all the support needed to continue to push the initiative forward. Unfortunately, there's been so many things that have gone down, from the injunction.

Speaker 4 From difficulty finding real estate, from difficulty finding resources.

Speaker 2 Difficulty with educating individuals in the community to understand what this is and the necessity, of this program.

Speaker 4 Throughout this time, I've watched, from the medical standpoint.

Speaker 2 How we've been lacking the support. Me being a.

Speaker 4 Doctor, I thought it was imperative for me to today to.

Speaker 2 Speak about how important it is for community and health. Health is not just what we eat and we drink.

Speaker 6 It's how we consume and see our life.

Speaker 4 And I think that with this car program has helped a.

Speaker 2 Lot of individuals from unfortunate circumstances see their life differently, which is essentially how they're going to view their health. It's a positive contribution to their health when they're able to be impactful in the community, support themselves financially, help their families, help other people in the community. It's also.

Speaker 4 Imperative that we continue.

Speaker 2 To support this throughout the nuances, throughout the.

Speaker 4 Obstacles that it must, be challenged with, because that is.

Speaker 2 The way things operate in our country. But let's continue to please continue to fight. We have people here that are doing what they have to do. We are in the midst of this thing. I don't want to see something like this be pulled, because this is very important to our communities and what we have to do going forward. And as long as.

Speaker 6 We're in it together, we're going to be able to fight this too. So hold.

Speaker 2 On tight, stay positive, stay committed. And we're going to have hope for the best.

Speaker 6 Outcome for this whole situation.

Speaker 1 Thank you. And now final speaker is Osbert. Cannabis. I think it's the cannabis place.

Speaker 2 Right. He's opened up last.

Speaker 1 Week and I said five.

Speaker 2 This is Mr. Samuel. He had signed up to speak, and, I believe that, they just they made sure that it was on the agenda. So I just wanted to give him the microphone first. Are you giving.

Speaker 1 Your seating your time to.

Speaker 2 Him? I'm not saying my time to him, but I know that he's.

Speaker 1 He's not on our list. But go ahead, please. We don't have time. Okay.

Speaker 7 Good afternoon. Me, New York State resident and entrepreneur. I'm here because I use cannabis for many years, and I've been around it for many years. I'm actually the first totally blind, smoke shop owner. I own a smoke shop in Pennsylvania. As someone who's operated my shop for about four days a week for the past year and a half in gross sales over 150%, I'd like to be in the forefront of the cannabis industry in the state of New York, my home state. I also my, my application is also, in the pending stage. And I'd also like to congratulate the board on their progress in meeting their goals and exceeding their goals with the c in minority applications, 80% of people with disabilities in the state of New York are unemployed. I'd like to be on the forefront of the industry, to be able to give other people like me and who are in my position, jobs and employment as well. Thank you.

Speaker 1 Thank you. Iceberg. And that's our final speaker for today. Thank you Asberg. Yeah.

Speaker 2 Thank you very much. First and foremost, I want to say thank you to you to remain Chris for, Mike. Mike, Mike, check. One two. One, two. Hear me now. Okay. Sound off. Right. Maybe I need to put my marine hat on. So what I would say was, I'd like to first thank you to our man and Chris for all of your hard work that you've done, you know, to date to get this to this point. For those that don't know me, my name is Osbert or Dounia. I'm the CEO of the Cannabis Place dispensary, and I'm happy to share a can I get some respect in the back, please? And I'm happy to share that after many trials and tribulations like the Dasani, process and all of its infinite delays, like the seven months of court delays that stopped our industry. We have finally opened our doors in Middle Village, Queens. Some of you may know that we're also licensed in new Jersey, and we're a licensed dispensary in Jersey city. People like to compare states. Let me give you a comparison. In new Jersey. The first businesses that opened or that had, crack at the adult market were the MSOs. Not us. Not small businesses, not social equity. Not, people with that were, justice impacted. But there were other challenges in Jersey, too. Like, it takes five months. My own employees had to take them five months to get a cannabis worker I.D. card. It's a year long municipal approval process and many, many others delays. I share this because while New York does have work to do, New York has gotten a lot of things right as well, and they deserve credit for that. One of which, in my opinion, is the 1000 foot rule. We

need to preserve and protect the 1000 foot rule. Otherwise, you're going to create a race to the bottom where only big MSOs will survive and and small businesses will be cutting each other's throats to stay afloat. Doing an impactful things like, for example, not paying our workers true living wages, not, being proactive members of our community. And so I apologize. I got one sentence left. So instead, this room should be working together to demand that our legislature does the right thing and immediately grants municipalities the authority to padlock unlicensed operators. Now.

Speaker 1 Thank you. And we appreciate your comments.

Speaker 2 Thank you.

Speaker 1 And I just want to thank everybody for participating here today. I just want to remind you that the time, location and the live stream link, well, one the video will be posted of this meeting. And in advance of our next meeting, we will post the time and location of that meeting. As well, we'll have our meeting minutes and a transcription posted. It's only the two of us. So may I get a motion in this meeting? And I second it. We are properly adjourned. Hahahahaha!