



**BOARD MEMBERS**

Jessica Garcia  
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Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney  
Brad Usher

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**TREMAINE WRIGHT**  
Cannabis Control Board Chair

**FELICIA A.B. REID**  
Acting Executive Director

**Meeting Minutes**

<b>Title:</b>	New York State Cannabis Control Board Meeting
<b>Time &amp; Date:</b>	April 24, 2025 at 10:00 AM
<b>Location:</b>	City University of New York Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy (CUNY SPH), 55 West 125 <sup>th</sup> Street, Ground Floor, Harlem, NY 10027 and Virtual via Webcast

**Attendance**

<b>Board Chair:</b>	Tremaine Wright
<b>Board Members Present:</b>	Jessica Garcia, Brad Usher
<b>Board Members Present (virtually from a private location due to extraordinary circumstances):</b>	Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney
<b>Board Members Absent:</b>	Hope Knight
<b>Others Present:</b>	Tahirah Cook, Celena Ditchev, John Kagia, Taylor Randi Lee, Patrick McKeage, James Rogers
<b>Others Present (virtually):</b>	Lyla Hunt, Matthew Wilson

**Agenda**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- III. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 20, 2025 Board Meeting
- IV. Consideration of Adult-Use Applications for Approval
- V. Consideration of CAURD Renewals
- VI. Consideration of Adult-Use Licensee Location Change Amendment Requests
- VII. Consideration of Public Convenience and Advantage Requests
- VIII. Consideration of Administrative Law Hearing Appeals
- IX. Office of Cannabis Management Report
- X. Public Comment
- XI. Adjourn



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Action Items

Table with 3 columns: Resolution No., Description, and Outcome. Rows include resolutions 2025-26 through 2025-31.

Notes & Comments

- Chair Wright welcomed everyone to their April Cannabis Control Board ("CCB" or the "Board") meeting and thanked her fellow Board members, Office of Cannabis Management ("OCM" or the "Office") staff, and stakeholders for their continued dedication to developing a healthy, dynamic, and inclusive cannabis industry here in New York State ("NYS"). She stated that they hope everyone had a safe and joyful 4/20. She noted that since their last meeting, over 35 new adult-use dispensaries have opened, significantly expanding access across the state. She stated that cultivators across New York are preparing for the 2025 season, and they anticipate another productive year. She further stated that as always, they remain focused on supporting equity, strengthening enforcement, and reinvesting in communities, building a cannabis industry that benefits all New Yorkers.
Upon a motion from Board Member Brad Usher, and a second from Board Member Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney, the Minutes of the March 20, 2025 CCB Meeting were approved unanimously.



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- Patrick McKeage, Director of Regulatory Operations for OCM, provided an overview of Resolution No. 2025-26, a Resolution to Issue Certain Adult-Use Cannabis Licenses. Before the Board today, is a cohort of 93 adult-use cannabis licenses which have cleared the multistep review process and are being recommended for approval by the Board. The majority of the applications are from the application window that opened on October 4, 2023, and closed for all license types on December 18, 2023. The 93 applicants include 2 cultivators, 34 retail dispensaries, 15 microbusinesses, 7 distributors and 35 processors. If approved today, this will bring the total number of adult-use cannabis licenses to 1,605. The Office continues to make progress through the queues and is almost finished with the review of new applications from the November Queue. There are still over 400 applications from the November Queue that are still working through the review process and have not received a final determination on their applications. Additionally, there are 180 applications in a provisional license status, which means that they are out there looking for a location that is viable and then will come back before the Board for final approval.
- Chair Wright asked if processors are allowed to share the same space.
- Patrick McKeage stated that yes, processors are able to share the same space, however, the spaces should be separately delineated in terms of the operating activity.
- Chair Wright asked if they would be allowed to use it at different hours if it is just designated based on time.
- Patrick McKeage stated that yes, he believes that is allowed.
- Chair Wright asked Patrick McKeage if he said that they have an estimate of 400 licenses that are still being reviewed from November.
- Patrick McKeage stated correct, still in a status that has not reached a final determination, in process, additional info required, enforcement hold, some not final status, still under review.
- Chair Wright asked if they have an estimate on when they will be able to complete that review and move forward.
- Patrick McKeage stated that he can get back with a more accurate timeline, but they are definitely working as fast as they can to get through them.
- Board Member Brad Usher asked if the 400 are all applicants, not just retail.
- Patrick McKeage stated correct and that there are a handful of microbusinesses.
- Board Member Brad Usher asked if most of them are retail.
- Patrick McKeage stated yes and that 180 are provisional and then they have 12 months to find a location once they receive their provisional license to come back before the Board.
- Chair Wright asked if it could be delivered to the Board, how many provisionals become due at particular months leading up to the next year.
- Patrick McKeage stated absolutely.
- Upon a motion from Board Member Jessica Garcia, and a second from Board Member Brad Usher, Resolution No. 2025-26, a Resolution to Issue Certain Adult-Use Cannabis Licenses, was approved unanimously.



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- Patrick McKeage, Director of Regulatory Operations for OCM, provided an overview of Resolution No. 2025-27, a Resolution to Renew Certain Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary Licenses. Part 116 of the Cannabis Law outlines the requirements for the Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary ("CAURD") license. The CAURD conditional period lasts four years, with the first renewal required after two years from the date the license was first granted. The six CAURD licenses up for renewal today received their initial CAURD licenses in early 2023. The CAURD licensees considered today, submitted a renewal application in accordance with Part 116, including requiring the submission of a notice to the applicable municipality or community board in which the CAURD licensee operates. The Office has reviewed the applications and is recommending approval of the six CAURD renewal applications before the Board today.
Chair Wright asked if CAURDs are able to renew if they are not operational.
Patrick McKeage stated that they have fortunately not encountered that situation yet but that would certainly be a factor for the Board to consider.
Chair Wright asked if all of these licenses are fully operational and fully participating, utilizing the full license.
Patrick McKeage stated correct, open dispensaries.
Upon a motion from Board Member Jessica Garcia, and a second from Board Member Brad Usher, Resolution No. 2025-27, a Resolution to Renew Certain Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary Licenses, was approved unanimously.

- Patrick McKeage, Director of Regulatory Operations for OCM, provided an overview of Resolution No. 2025-28, a Resolution to Approve Certain Cannabis License and Permit Amendment Requests for the Purpose of a Change in the Location or Cultivation Tier of a Licensee or Permittee's Licensed Premises or Study Site. The Cannabis Law and Regulations allow the Board to authorize amendments to cannabis licenses. The Office launched an amendment survey on August 27, 2024, which allows adult-use cannabis licensees to request certain amendments, including location changes, which in accordance with the cannabis regulations, require Board approval. The Office has been reviewing amendment requests on a rolling basis in tandem with the review of applications. The amendment requests before the Board today include a mix of both supply side and retail licensees. In total, there are 46 licensees who are requesting either a location or a cultivation method change in some form. The Office will only process amendment requests received via the amendment survey which is located on the Office's website under the "Licensing tab".
Chair Wright asked if most of these changes are just specific to their location, whether they do their day-to-day operations. She stated that they have a handful, maybe 5 or 6 tier changes, and then asked if these are conditionals that are moving into their adult-use license.
Patrick McKeage stated that they were conditional, and they picked, let's say, I want to be outdoor and now they are coming back and saying actually I want to mixed light at the same location.



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- Chair Wright asked if they are just helping conditionals change to full licenses, and they are allowing people that have micro licenses and or processing distribution licenses to identify new locations where they are going to continue to operate.
- Patrick McKeage stated correct.
- Upon a motion from Board Member Jessica Garcia, and a second from Board Member Brad Usher, Resolution No. 2025-28, a Resolution to Approve Certain Cannabis License and Permit Amendment Requests for the Purpose of a Change in the Location or Cultivation Tier of a Licensee or Permittee’s Licensed Premises or Study Site, was approved unanimously.

- Patrick McKeage, Chief Operating Officer for OCM, provided an overview of Resolution No. 2025-29, a Resolution to Approve the Certain Public Convenience and Advantage Requests. The Public Convenience and Advantage (“PCA”) process allows applicants to request approval from the Board of a location that is within the 1,000 or 2,000-foot radius of another retail dispensary, providing that such location is determined to serve the PCA. At the February 20, 2025, CCB meeting, the Board voted to amend the current PCA regulations. The proposed regulatory package is currently out for public comment until May 19, 2025. The Office encourages applicants, licensees and members of the public to submit comments on those proposed regulations to help inform the final rule. Comments can be submitted via e-mail at regulations@ocm.ny.gov or via mail to P.O. Box 2071, Albany, NY 12220. There are two PCA requests before the Board today. These requests will be evaluated and considered based on the current regulations Part 119.4 which are in effect. The PCA requests before the Board today are being considered for the complete application and not just the proposed retail dispensary location, meaning that if the Board does determine there to be PCA, the whole license will be approved. Conversely, if the Board determines there is no PCA, the application will be denied, and the applicant will be unable to submit a new location for consideration in the future. Since this is the final review of applications before the Board, only applications that have completed all outstanding requirements on their application are eligible for the Board to consider this PCA request.
- Board Member Brad Usher asked that on the point that this is a denial of the license if they vote no, if they could clarify why that is based on the law.
- Celena Ditchev, Associate Counsel for OCM, asked Board Member Usher if he would like to know the source for that.
- Board Member Brad Usher asked why them voting against one of these requires that it be a rejection of the entire license.
- Celena Ditchev commented that starting with Cannabis Law 64, the selection criteria, when the Board is evaluating applications, they are making a determination on the entire application and when they look also then, including subsection G, which references the granting of a license as the public interest. She noted that also Part 119.4 says that the Board may determine that granting a license would promote a PCA. She stated that the inference by the language itself is that when this comes before the Board, it is the entire



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application and not the location itself. She further stated that it does not come in piecemeal and there is no mechanism by which the application is reviewed in pieces.

- Chair Wright asked if an applicant who wants to have an ongoing conversation about potential locations can continue to do that with the Office and it just will not be presented to the Board until they have made a determination that this is the location that they want to present as part of their final application review.
- Celena Ditchev stated that yes, because before they get to that point, there is a period in which the applicant will be notified that their location is not viable, and the Office will provide the reasoning as to why it is not viable. She stated that in that same notification, the Office will provide to the applicant the options before them and that is whether or not they would like to proceed with the nonviable location in that it would go to the Board in its entirety, and that is spelled out in the notice. She stated that there is also the option for the applicant to cure, if it is within a very close distance, they always have the option to get a surveyor to present that information to the Office. She further stated that there is a 30-day cure period, and that is the period in which they would have that open dialog with the Office.
- Chair Wright stated that although they had granted licenses previously, she is not sure that they communicated it clearly. She then asked if prior to this meeting this month, they did send notice to fully explain what this is to those applicants that were prepared to come before the Board for this meeting.
- Celena Ditchev stated that yes, they sent notice to the applicants to ensure that they one, wanted to move forward, and they understood that it was the entire application going before the Board and they sought written confirmation that they still wanted to proceed. She further stated that they also notified the municipalities to ensure that they had all of the most opportunity to submit any additional information or opinions.
- Board Member Jessica Garcia asked if this is a change in their practice. She stated that they have approved PCAs before.
- Celena Ditchev stated that she does not believe that this is a change in their practice. She stated that she does not know that it was spelled out as explicitly in the past, but it would not be a change from the practice, and it is certainly in line with the way in which the cannabis law and the regulations spell out the PCA in the manner in which those come before the Board. She further stated that it is really a review of the application and whether or not it is going to serve a PCA.
- Chair Wright asked Patrick McKeage if he could provide an overview of the relevant information for the PCA request submitted by Soho Dispensary Corp.
- Patrick McKeage commented that all this information they shared with the Board in prior as part of the record to make these determinations. He stated that Retail 1586 entity's name is Soho Dispensary, and that they are a Social and Economic Equity ("SEE") applicant. He noted that the proposed PCA request is at 107-29 A 71st Avenue in Forest Hills, New York. He stated that the closest active dispensary to this location is at 107-18 70th Road, Forest Hills, operated by Curaleaf NY. He noted that it opened on July 26, 2024 for adult-use sales,



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and it is a co-located medical and adult-use dispensary. He stated that the two locations are approximately 282 feet away from each other. He noted that there is no other dispensary in the immediate vicinity, except for the Curaleaf location. He stated that there is a municipal opinion for the Soho Dispensary from Queens Community Board 6 that was in favor of this proposed location, and they also followed up with a letter dated on December 12, 2024 after the PCA request, making it clear that this was for a PCA request. He further stated that the Office has issued a recommendation that due to the proximity of the other operating adult-use dispensary that is 282 feet away from the proposed location, the Office is recommending denial of this PCA request.

- Chair Wright stated that to begin their discussion, she thinks they first just need to establish that there is a proximity concern for this entity, and they want to make sure here in the record that per the report given by the Office, there is one retail dispensary within 1,000 feet of Soho Dispensary Corp's proposed location. She stated that the Office identified the closest dispensary at 107-18 70th Road, Forest Hills, New York, which they have determined is 282 feet away. She noted that subject to Section 119.4(a), no retail dispensary license or microbusiness shall be granted for any premises which shall be (1), within a 1,000-foot radius of a Registered Organization ("RO"), ROD, or any other premises for which a retail dispensary license or microbusiness license has been issued in a municipality having a population of 20,000 or more, unless the Board has determined that issuing the license would promote PCA, except that distance requirements between a retail dispensary or microbusiness and a RO shall cease to be a requirement past December 2023. She further stated that based on review, Soho Dispensary Corp's proposed location does not meet Section 119.4 regulations, therefore, the CCB is reviewing this matter to consider PCA.
- Board Member Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney asked if given what Mr. Mckeage said, recommendation that they deny it, then that means that they are denying the entire application and their license.
- Chair Wright stated yes. She then asked if they are looking at an aerial view counting 280 feet and are they actually going down the block and around the corner to count the feet.
- Patrick McKeage stated that it is a direct line measurement from door to door, so radius.
- Chair Wright asked if they are looking going over backyards and buildings.
- Patrick McKeage commented correct.
- Chair Wright asked if they have an understanding of what it would be if they actually went down the block and tracked an actual path to that next location.
- Patrick McKeage stated that it would likely be a larger distance.
- Chair Wright asked if they have that information.
- Patrick McKeage stated that he does not have that right here.
- Chair Wright asked if all of the community supports this.
- Patrick Mckeage stated that there was a positive municipal opinion.
- Chair Wright asked if that came from the community board.
- Patrick McKeage stated Community Board 6.



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- Chair Wright asked if they have an estimate of what the population is in Forest Hills.
- Patrick McKeage stated that he does not have that on hand.
- Board Member Brad Usher stated that based on some other information, there is approximately 83,000, 84,000 people in Forest Hills specifically.
- Chair Wright stated that her understanding is that this is also near a train station and lots of foot traffic that happens, so they know that there is lots of people that may be impacted by the availability of this facility. She then asked if the current store that they are referring to is a Curaleaf RO that is participating in adult-use.
- Patrick McKeage stated correct.
- Chair Wright asked if they are only selling their own products. She then asked if they are limited in what they can sell.
- Patrick McKeage stated that they actually are mandated that at this point, it started out 50% of their shelf space has to be product, not from themselves. He further stated that that requirement goes to 40% after a certain timing threshold in the regulations, but they are required to sell both, they can sell their own product, but also products from other suppliers that are not RODs.
- Chair Wright asked if they are mandating 50%, but the expectation is that will be a declining number, so actually the variety that is being offered at that store is quite limited at this time. She then asked if it is not the same that exists in full adult-use stores.
- Patrick McKeage stated that he does not think that he can say that without looking at the menu.
- Chair Wright stated that they can estimate that if 50% of the product is only produced by one processor, that it may be a more refined selection than it is for general adult-use dispensary that has the ability to select from all processors in the state, and they do not have 50% dedicated to any particular brand, and or processor and that in her mind, she is seeing more variety being offered to people in this community by having this additional store.
- Board Member Jessica Garcia stated that she is also curious about the experience and believes that this applicant is proposing having onsite consumption down the line. She then asked if Curaleaf offers that to.
- Patrick McKeage stated no and that just generally, they are still working on the onsite consumption regulations and future licenses and that will all kind of be folded into that future package of what does onsite consumption look like.
- Board Member Brad Usher stated that one of the claims that the applicant makes is that there is significant illicit store activity in this community and that having another legal store might help address that. He then asked if the Office has evidence that that is in fact the case.
- Patrick McKeage stated that he would have to go back but just speaking off the top of his head, he does know there is a lot of illicit activity in that area.
- Upon a motion from Board Member Jessica Garcia, and a second from Board Member Brad Usher, the motion to approve the request in the matter of Soho Dispensary and grant the license because the proposed location would promote PCA under the factor set forth in



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Cannabis Law, Section 64 and Title 9, New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Section 119.4, was approved unanimously.

- Chair Wright asked for a brief overview of the relevant information for the PCA request submitted for applicant, Blaze NY LLC.
- Patrick McKeage stated that this application is a Retail, 2023-1096, and the entity's name is Blaze NY LLC. He noted that the proposed address for their retail dispensary is 519 Columbia Street, Hudson, New York 12534. He stated that the closest active dispensary to this proposed location is at 531 Warren Street in Hudson, New York, 12534. He stated that it is approximately 345 feet from the proposed location and this dispensary opened on July 9, 2024 for adult-use sales to the public. He noted that additionally, there is another retail dispensary in Hudson operated by Hydroman Dispensary LLC. He stated that they are over the 2,000-foot threshold for Hudson, New York, which is a municipality under 20,000, so they have the 2,000-foot buffer zone and this dispensary does not create a conflict with the regulations as it has been measured. He stated that there is a municipal opinion for this proposed location from the initial submission of the application and there is also a letter of support from the Mayor of Hudson, supporting the dispensary at the proposed location. He further stated that the Office's recommendation, given the close proximity between the operational retail dispensary at approximately 345 feet, the Office is recommending denial of this PCA request at this time.
- Chair Wright stated that just to begin the conversation, she wanted to establish that there was a proximity concern for this entity. She stated that per the report given by the Office, there is one retail dispensary within 2,000 feet of Blaze NY LLC's proposed location. She noted that the Office identified the closest dispensary at 531 Warren Street, Hudson, New York, approximately 345 feet away. She noted that subject to Section 119.4(b), no retail dispensary license or microbusiness license shall be granted for any premise which shall be within a 2,000-foot radius of a RO, ROD, or any other premise for which a retail dispensary license or microbusiness license has been issued in a municipality having a population of 20,000 or less, unless the Board has determined that issuing the license would promote PCA. She further stated that based on review, Blaze NY LLC's proposed location does not meet Section 119.4 regulations, therefore, the CCB is reviewing this matter to consider PCA.
- Board Member Brad Usher commented that this is a pretty small community of less than 6,000 people he believes, and he is having trouble seeing this as serving the PCA in a situation where there are multiple existing stores, so there does not seem like there is an additional need for a store in this community at this location.
- Chair Wright stated that she would agree, and she does not know that they are definitively here to define the need, but they are supposed to be thinking about what makes convenience and advantage for communities. She stated that she hears the Mayor, as well as the other people and persons who live in this community and have identified that they believe that this will benefit them and that it benefits their community to have this store. She stated that that is extremely important because that they do not want to shift to trying to define, at least she is



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worrisome of trying to define needs versus define of them leaning in on convenience and advantage. She further stated that she thinks it was somewhat compelling that even the Mayor reached out to them to say that this is the type of licensee and business that corresponds to what the MRTA purports to support, that the MRTA defined that they wanted inclusivity, they wanted opportunity, they want access, and that is exactly what the letter of support means in for, and that resonated with her in this moment.

- Board Member Jessica Garcia commented that she has to admit that she is conflicted with this application. She stated that on the one hand, she understands that the applicant is looking to establish his dispensary on a different street that has less pedestrian traffic and it is not really this kind of street where tourists go, whereas Warren, where the established retail store is where they do get a lot of outsiders to come in and shop and use that strip. She stated that so he is proposing to establish himself in an area that is off the beaten path that just happens to be within 400 feet of another store if you jump over buildings and trash cans and all of that. She stated that it is a truck route where he is looking to establish which she would assume is some dangerous traffic, so even though he is off the beaten path and technically would not be competing with that touristy traffic on Warren, she has concerns about the safety of pedestrians being on that street. She stated that she has questions more than she has answers and she does not have a definitive answer on all of this. She stated that she knows that both the Mayor and the applicant made the point that parking should not be an issue because there is a municipal lot right next door, but she also knows small towns, and that means that municipal lots get heavily utilized if parking is limited on the street, so adding another store that potentially people would need to drive to because it is not really a pedestrian friendly street and she does have concerns about the traffic. She stated that she also like Member Usher, has concerns about density and it is a small population, and she is curious how many tourists, and that she knows Hudson is popular, but she is curious whether the tourist traffic would be adequate and there are a lot of other dispensaries in that region within 10 miles and if people are driving to dispensaries, there is a lot of options in that area. She further stated that she is conflicted and has more questions than she has answers on this application.
- Chair Wright stated that as they are thinking about the convenience, she is going to ask that they stay away from what their financial viability will be because she does not think that that is really the scope of their conversation. She stated that if there is lots of competition and someone is saying, yes, I want to take the risk, and they have determined what their numbers are and it makes sense for their business, she thinks that that is a fair assessment for a business to make. She stated that she thinks that when they are talking about what convenience and access looks like for communities, it is not to second guess a business's determination that they only need a certain profit margin or that they are going to have a lean program versus one that is able to hire more people. She stated that she hears you on the concerns with the street traffic, however, it is a commercially viable location that has been submitted and some determination by that town and that community has already been made



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that they want and or support commercial activity in that space and that location. She stated that she does not know that, at least from the information that they have been given, that it looks like an industrial park, or that is such an industrial space that it is limited commercial activity. She stated that it seems that what they are looking at again is space that is walkable, even though if it is not the best walkable traffic. She stated that there is lots of streets that trucks are routed to just because they are wider, not because they are dangerous. She stated that for her, she needs to listen to what she is hearing from community when they tell her that that is the spaces that they have identified for commercial activity. She stated that the number, and she does not want to lean in on the tourist traffic, but she does think that they saw the estimates that with every store that is proposed currently was operating just based on the population of this city, they would be looking at on average, it is like 1,500 people per store and while that is an interesting number, she also does not lean into it completely because, and that might be viable, that might make enough sense for the owner to say, I want to take the risk, but that is something that she does not need to determine for them because they might have a plan that allows them to operate with 200 sales a week, but she thinks that they have got to be able to distance the question of what success is for a business from their determination and allow that business to make that determination.

- Board Member Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney stated that she too is conflicted for many of the reasons that have already been stated, but she has a question for counsel. She then asked if municipal opinion is one of the factors for the Board to consider in the current regulation related to PCA waivers.
- Celena Ditchchev stated that it is a factor for consideration, and she wanted to read it as it is in the law so that she can answer that directly. She stated that the municipal opinion does not itself appear as a factor under 119.4(b). She noted that what is there includes the number of class where municipality is mentioned is subdivision (1), the number classes, character of other licenses and proximity to the premises and in the particular municipality. She stated that of the seven current factors, the municipal opinion or support or lack thereof is not its own factor. She further stated that however, factor seven is any factors specified by law or regulation that are relevant to determine the granting of a license and whether that would promote a PCA for that community.
- Board Member Jessica Garcia stated that she does not know where all of them are going to vote on this one, but because she has more questions than she has answers, she would rather than vote on this request and application, table it to allow them to be able to vote with the information that they need, at least that she needs and she would like to put that as a suggestion if that is amenable to others.
- Upon a motion from Board Member Jessica Garcia, and a second from Board Member Brad Usher, to table the discussion in the matter of Blaze NY LLC and consider at the next CCB meeting, was approved unanimously.



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- Celena Ditchev, Associate Counsel for OCM, provided an overview of Resolution No. 2025-30, a Resolution to Render a Decision for Administrative Appeal BMillz LLC. v. OCM, Complaint Numbers 001 2023 0621 0031 and 117 2023 0718 0054. The CCB is charged with the responsibility of issuing a final determination when an administrative decision is appealed. This resolution is the result of an Administrative Appeal that was filed after a decision was rendered by the Office of Administrative Hearings ("OAH"). In this appeal, the appellant, BMillz LLC, asserts the following: the Administrative Law Judge's ("ALJ") decision was untimely, arbitrary and capricious, OCM's regulatory inspection was arbitrary and capricious, a quote dissonance between the Cannabis Law and regulations regarding the ability of a business owner to refuse, and OCM has failed to comport its actions with federal and state constitutions. The recommendation before the Board today is to confirm the ALJ's decision and deny the appellant's requested relief for the following reasons: the appellant did not establish the decision was untimely under the law, the decision was not arbitrary and capricious as it was based in reason and made with regard to the facts, the penalties assessed were not arbitrary and capricious and were in accordance with the law, and the remaining arguments are facial challenges not specific to the appellant beyond scope of the appeal.
Upon a motion from Board Member Brad Usher, and a second from Board Member Crystal Rodriguez-Dabney, Resolution No. 2025-30, a Resolution to Render a Decision for Administrative Appeal BMillz LLC. v. OCM, Complaint Numbers 001 2023 0621 0031 and 117 2023 0718 0054, affirming the decision and order, was approved unanimously.

- Celena Ditchev, Associate Counsel for OCM, provided an overview of Resolution No. 2025-31, a Resolution to Render a Decision for Administrative Appeal 670 Main LLC dba Main Street Mini Mart v. OCM, Inspection No. 003 2024 0627 0002. This matter stems from a decision issued by the OAH. The matter that went before the ALJ was the validity of the Order to Seal ("OTS") that was issued. In this appeal, the appellant, 670 Main LLC, asserts the following: OCM failed to distinguish between cannabis and prohibited cannabinoids, OCM is over enforcing sealing orders, OCM cannot issue an OTS based on cannabinoids or synthetic cannabinoids, OCM failed to establish seized as items cannabis under the law, the ALJ erroneously relied on evidence seized as part of de minimis analysis, and OCM failed to comport with statutory and regulatory requirements to consider evidence of abatement as a factor to vacate the OTS. The recommendation is to confirm the ALJ's decision and deny the appellant's requested relief for the following reasons: OCM has authority to inspect any person offering to sell cannabis, cannabis products, and cannabinoid hemp and hemp extracts, the Cannabis Law does not require testing, OCM also authorized to seize cannabis, cannabis products, cannabinoid hemp and hemp extracts products or any product marketed or labeled as such found in the possession of a person engaged in unlicensed activity, the ALJ properly considered the evidence in determining if the unlicensed activity was a de minimis part of the appellant's business, and regulations set forth process for abatement on notice to the Office and the Board, not at an emergency hearing on the OTS.



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- Upon a motion from Board Member Brad Usher, and a second from Board Member Jessica Garcia, Resolution No. 2025-31, a Resolution to Render a Decision for Administrative Appeal 670 Main LLC dba Main Street Mini Mart v. OCM, Inspection No. 003 2024 0627 0002, affirming the decision and order, was approved unanimously.

- John Kagia, Executive Deputy Director of the Office of Market Policy, Innovation, & Analytics for OCM, Tahirah Cook, Program Specialist for OCM, James Rogers, Director and Deputy General Counsel OCM Trade Practices Bureau for OCM, Lyla Hunt, Deputy Director, Public Health and Education, Health and Scientific Affairs Division for OCM, and Matthew Wilson, Director of the Community Grant Reinvestment Fund for OCM, provided the following OCM updates.

Market Update

- New York has sold \$1.46 billion in legal cannabis since the market launched. March sales reached nearly \$140 million, the highest sales month so far, bringing the 2025 year-to-date total to \$375.5 million. Through early April, New York is on pace to reach over \$1.5 billion of retail sales in 2025.
Sales per store continue to decline as more stores open and other market forces take hold.
Long Island and Staten Island stores lead the average regional revenue due to lower store counts relative to population.
From August 2024 to February 2025, older cohorts ceded market share to newer cohorts.
Some upstate regions have declined more than their downstate counterparts.
As new brands and products appear on retail store shelves, average retail prices in many categories are down 10% plus in the last 12 months.
There are currently 513 brands in the market, with the top 50 brands commanding nearly 70% of sales. Flower is the most concentrated category with 302 brands.
ROs maintain their strong position with 10% of all sales and 19% of flower sales.
With over 1,600 licenses issued, there are 268 CAURDs with final licenses, 9 ROs, 207 provisionally approved retail dispensaries, 202 cultivators, 364 processors, 193 distributors, 256 microbusinesses, and 366 adult-use retail dispensaries.

PowerScore Update

- The PowerScore report is due on August 31, 2025, and applies to all licensees authorized to cultivate. The PowerScore webinar, hosted by Resource Innovation Institute (RII), is now available on the Office's YouTube channel. Video tutorials are forthcoming. For questions about



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reporting requirements and timelines, email the Office at [PowerScore@ocm.ny.gov](mailto:PowerScore@ocm.ny.gov). For questions about the PowerScore platform or accessing your account, email RII at [PowerScore@resourceinnovation.org](mailto:PowerScore@resourceinnovation.org).

- Message from Acting Executive Director Felicia A. B. Reid
  - o Taylor Randi Lee, Press Secretary for OCM, read the following message from Acting Executive Director Felicia A. B. Reid: “Good morning, Board Members and New York’s cannabis community. Spring seems like it’s finally here, and in this season of renewal, growth, and change, it’s fitting that we’re here on this beautiful day, to keep on our important work. I apologize that I can’t be here with you today. I got my muck boots on already covered in dirt from my own garden, and I’m spending the day out visiting Cannabis Cultivator Community Farms on Long Island. A special thank you to the Long Island Farm Bureau. Even so, I know you’re in great hands with the OCM team. A few quick hits and highlights. I want to thank Tom Kidera, OCM’s Acting Chief Administrative Law Judge, for all his work, guidance, and commitment leading the hearings team over the past few years. Tom retired from state service earlier this month, and it was a real privilege to know him. OCM will be onboarding a new Chief Administrative Law Judge at the end of May, and I’m excited to introduce you to him then. I’m also glad to let you know that we have concluded the search for a new Chief Equity Officer and are finalizing her onboard to the agency, pending Board approval. OCM received over 400 applications for the role, and it’s been a long process to find the right person for the social, economic and equity work ahead. The Office and the industry celebrated four years of the MRTA earlier this month and what an incredible four years that it has been. In commemoration of the milestone, swing over to OCM socials for a retrospective short put together by OCM’s communications team. I’m thrilled to announce that OCM will be inaugurating its first cannabis research study led by Dr. Nakesha Abel and her team in Health and Scientific Affairs. OCM has long had a statutory obligation to do research and it’s wonderful to be in a place to do that work. And finally, claps, snaps, and roses to the many folks at OCM who brought to life OCM’s higher education campaign and the Responsible Workforce Training Program. With the launch of these two initiatives, one focused on preparing the cannabis workforce and the other on empowering New Yorkers with information about safe consumption, OCM is making critical investments in New York’s communities. With that, I wish you all a great day and as ever, Excelsior.”
- Social and Economic Equity (SEE) Update



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- Of the licenses issued today, 63% of adult-use licenses are SEE owned. The breakdown includes 53% Minority-Owned Businesses (MOB), 69% Women-Owned Businesses (WOB), 20% Communities Disproportionately Impacted (CDI), 2% Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDV), and 2% Distressed Farmers.
To date, 55% of all adult-use licenses issued are SEE owned. The breakdown includes 52% MOB, 63% WOB, 27% CDI, 14% SDV and 17% Distressed Farmers. There are currently 812 SEE licensees.
The breakdown for SEE across the supply chain includes 38% of Adult-Use Cultivators, 48% of Adult-Use Processors, 44% of Adult-Use Distributors, 58% of Adult-Use Microbusinesses, and 80% of Adult-Use Retail Dispensaries.
The CAURD Grant Program is open and accepting applications. Funds will be issued to awardees through a one-time reimbursement on a first-come, first-served basis until available funding has been depleted. Grants range between \$10,000 - \$30,000 for eligible expenses. Currently, 207 applications have been received and 77 are pending approval. Final quality assurance checks are being completed before funds are released. Questions about the opportunity should be sent to the grant administrator at support@forwardplatform.zendesk.com or by calling (855) 933-5556.
Cannabis Hub and Incubator Program ("CHIP") Academy, the educational training program for licensees, launched Part 4 on April 8, 2025. Sessions are typically held on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays. Video recordings will be available to licensees.
Trade Practices Bureau (TPB) Update
TPB, a new unit within the OCM, is designed to deal with market integrity issues. Ongoing investigations include inversion, market monopolization and ownership and control. Violations can be reported at cannabis.ny.gov/tpb or by calling the confidential tip line at 855-420-TIPS (855-420-8477).
The second Market Integrity bulletin, issued jointly by TPB and Compliance, advises all licensees against two kinds of Pay-to-Play between retailers and processors or brands. This applies to tabling at retail establishment and any kind of incentive paid to retailers or employees for sale or promotion of products even when facilitated by a third party.
Public Health & Education Update
The Office and the NYS Department of Labor ("NYS DOL") announced the launch of the Responsible Workforce training ("RWT") program, a critical initiative aimed at providing comprehensive safety education to workers in



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the cannabis industry. NYS adult-use cannabis regulations require that all managers, employees, contractors, volunteers, or persons performing activities under a licensed cannabis business, must complete RWT within 30 days of the employee’s start date. Current employees must complete the required training components by May 16th. RWT consists of four required components, including:

- Cannabis Product Safety & Responsibility: An hour long free online course developed by OCM focusing on protecting health and safety in the regulated cannabis industry.
• Cannabis Workforce Responsibility: 40-minute free online course highlighting labor standards, worker rights, and workplace health and safety.
• Licensees are responsible for providing at least two hours of job specific training relevant to their licensed activity.
• Licensees are responsible for providing at least one hour of Implicit Bias Training or Cultural Competency Training.
o The Higher Education Campaign, led by the OCM, expands public awareness and access to OCM’s library of cannabis educational resources designed to help New Yorkers make informed decisions about cannabis consumption with materials tailored for diverse audiences and available in multiple languages.
o The Cannabis Education Library covers a variety of topics, including Know the Law, Safer & More Responsible Cannabis Consumption, Medical Cannabis Program Resources and Special Populations.
- Community Reinvestment Program Update
o The first round of the Community Grant Reinvestment Fund (“CGRF”) will issue grants to 501(c)(3) community-based organizations to fund programs serving young people, ages 0-24 years old, focusing on mental health, housing, and workforce development.
o Progress to Date
• The Office issued the Request for Application (“RFA”) on October 16, 2024 and the application deadline was December 18, 2024.
• Office of General Services (“OGS”) completed a Minimum Eligibility Review of the 451 applications received and advanced 340 applications.



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- OCM started its application review on January 23, 2025. Each application was reviewed and scored by three individuals for a total of 1,020 evaluations completed. OCM spent more than 1,550 hours of evaluation time to complete and is now concluding the evaluation effort.
  - Next Steps
    - The application evaluation and scoring are now complete.
    - Cannabis Advisory Board (“CAB”) award consideration in early May.
    - Tentative award notices, Office of State Comptroller (“OSC”) Procurement Record approval in early May through July.
    - The CAB will make a public announcement of awardees in July or August.
- Chair Wright asked if Staten Island is one of their best performers, and they remain one of their best performers, but they are seeing a leveling off of all of their stores, and despite the leveling, they are still the most successful group so far.
- John Kagia stated that exactly and that is a really important dual trend to observe out of Staten Island is you have still some of the best performing dispensaries in the state, but as they have opened more dispensaries in Staten Island, the average performance of each dispensary has been impacted.
- Chair Wright stated that they are seeing tremendous diversity in the preroll sector and that is where most of the Processor 3s are landing. She stated that they all are creating prerolls, but they are seeing no change, and they are seeing tremendous growth in diversity number of participants, but it is steady. She then asked if they have any analysis for that or just taking that as a fact that there is more diversity, and it has actually just stabilized.
- John Kagia stated that prerolls have been historically a very strong category in New York, and they have been basically selling, compared to other markets, their share of prerolls is about double what it is in other jurisdictions. He stated that it is a bit of unique category relative to the illicit market, relative to unregulated market and what he means by that is the unregulated market primarily competes on flower, but making high-quality pre rolls at scale is something that the legal market actually competes quite effectively on. He stated that consumers seem less price sensitive to prerolls because of the convenience factor than they are to other categories. He stated that they are working to better understand the consumer psychology that is influencing the purchasing of prerolls and how that weighs in their spend, but it does seem that consumers are more willing to pay essentially more for the prerolls than they are for products which, for example, you can buy more cheaply from the unregulated market. He further stated that the form factors that they are seeing for the prerolls, the combinations of whether it is a two, three, five or seven pack, the bundles that pre rolls are being offered in, there is a lot of creativity that has gone into the pre roll form factor and design esthetic that is resonating with the market and that is allowing them to maintain their



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premium price point or hold their price points better than some of the other categories where the competition has intensified quite a bit and where there are alternative nonlegal options.

- Board Member Jessica Garcia asked what are the reasons that anyone might be denied the grant.
- Tahirah Cook stated that some of the reasons could be that the evidence that they are providing, because the grant is on a reimbursement basis, so it is just the receipts do not match up with what the applicant is requesting. She stated that in this instance, a lot of the applicants are not CAURD licensees, so therefore had to be denied, but for the most part, Forward has been communicating and working with their CAURD licensees to ensure that their applications are up to par and getting them approved. She further stated that it is a very, very low rate of denial.
- Chair Wright stated that they have received a number of inquiries from applicants and or licensees who have been locked out of access to their portals, be it for updating, additional information or whatever might be needed. She then asked if that is something that they would be reporting via this tip line or the online complaint portal, or it should be going to some other division in OCM to handle those concerns.
- Jim Rogers stated that that would be something that they would tackle alongside of licensing and a lot of times when you go to that portal, there is a number of tracks, some go to enforcement, some go to compliance, some come to trade practices and other units, but they send them to the right place.
- Chair Wright asked if people able to make anonymous complaints or must they identify who they are when they report to the tip line or the online complaint.
- Jim Roger stated that both the tip line and the phone line, as well as the online portal are, if you want to make anonymous tips and they have received lots of them, you can and there is no way that they track it.
- Chair Wright asked if OCM or NYSDOL help their businesses develop implicit bias training or cultural competency training and/or the role specific, that is more easily handled, but particularly the implicit bias. She then asked if they have that online available to them.
- Lyla Hunt stated that there are several implicit bias and cultural competency related resources that are readily available online and free that are available to use. She further stated that they have been fielding some questions related to this and working with the NYSDOL in so doing, and they continue to be able to help those in the workforce find the resources that best suit their needs.
- Board Member Jessica Garcia stated that the first two trainings listed here, the product safety and responsibility and the workforce responsibility trainings, those are free offered by the state by OCM and the DOL. She stated that she has seen third party educational institutions pop up saying that they offer the mandated workforce trainings to licensees. She then asked to elaborate on who they may be and who should licensees be working with.
- Lyla Hunt stated that the training components that are required as part of the formalized RWT program are the ones you see here on the slide and that includes the course developed by



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OCM and the course develop by DOL. She stated that there are some separate entities out there that have especially in other states, other RWT programs, and what they see on the slide is really what is required as it relates to their adult-use regulations and compliance with that component.

- Board Member Jessica Garcia asked what is covered for the medicinal program so patients can know what they can find if they were to go there.
- Lyla Hunt stated that not just patients but practitioners and pharmacists. She stated that there is information on how to register with the program, how to designate a caregiver if individuals are underage, and they also have information for practitioners on how to get engaged with the program, what conditions might be permissible or might work best for the medical cannabis program, and really just breaking down the nuances of how the program works, how to engage with the program and whether or not it might be right for different patients to consider.
- Board Member Jessica Garcia asked if they see a need for any education with the public on the distinction between hemp products and the cannabis products.
- Lyla Hunt stated that she thinks there is a huge need for a distinction between products and that they also continue to prioritize educating the public about how to recognize what is a regulated product from a regulated dispensary versus an illicit product for those products type distinction, as well as the program type distinctions between the medical cannabis program and the adult-use cannabis program and how that interfaces differently for the public, potentially for consumers for patients, as something that they will continue to and have several resources out there and available to folks to interface with.

- Members of the public were provided the opportunity to address the CCB during the Public Comment period. Participating individuals must limit their remarks to two minutes and should only be related to specific agenda items. Public Comments are listed in Appendix A.

- The CCB adjourned the meeting.



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Appendix A

NYS Cannabis Control Board 4/24/2025 Meeting – Public Comment

Table with 5 columns: First Name, Last Name, Organization (If Applicable), Public Comment. Row 1: Winde Bertrand, Sinsemilla De Ma 420 CBD, detailed public comment. Row 2: Luis Ortiz, Wepa Distributors, brief public comment.



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells for ID, Name, Title, and Company, followed by a long text block. Row 2: 3., Evelyn, Zapata, The New York Cannabis Times Corp., followed by a text block starting with 'Hi, my name is Evelyn Zapata...'.



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Table with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells for ID, Name, and Title; text for Zen and Mary. Row 2: ID '4.', Name 'Beck', Title 'Hickey', text for Zen and Mary.



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells followed by a long text block. Row 2: 5., Liz, Ortega, High Rhize Farms, Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Liz Ortega. My husband and I, Eric Ortega, are the owners of High Rhize Farms, a minority owned cannabis cultivation business. We're here today because despite completing the CCTM program and submitting our application, we have been waiting 16 months without any considerable updates on our license status, which is pending review in the December



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Table with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells followed by a long text paragraph. Row 2: 6., Dwayne, Britt, MVC League LLC, followed by a text paragraph.



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				<p>New York state's role in this war disproportionately impacted black communities, including my neighborhood. So it's beyond disheartening. To know that 16 months later, we have only received a single email from OCM because we requested the assistance of my assembly member due to the lack of communication from the OCM office. After our assembly member stepped in, we did receive one email from OCM and it stated, and I quote, that our tier two license application is still in submitted status and unassigned. It's disheartening to know that we have not yet been reviewed and only received one email in 16 months. And we're 100% black-owned business. So, in the meantime, because we're required to have it at the application time, we were required to secure a building and we've been paying that ever since. And we've lost tens of thousands of dollars during that process. And we want to know what the plan is of OCM. Are they intending to mislead applicants in the thinking there's a possibility of obtaining a license in a reasonable amount of time or without incurring debilitating expenses? It's unreasonable for applicants to incur these expenses while we're waiting for OCM to get their act together. OCM counted its plans.</p>
7.	Bill	Hughes	Blaze NY LLC	<p>Hi, yes, Bill Hughes, Blaze, NY, we were the one with the waiver, third generation in the city of Hudson, born in the second ward, moved to the fourth ward, where I served 14 years as an elected official. That area has since been deemed by Governor Patterson at the time as low to moderate income, where people really struggle to live. Doing the war on drugs, that area was extremely decimated. Hundreds of families that look like me were, you know, really jailed and broke up. When you look at Hudson, it really is two sides of Hudson. Warren Street is the center of the city. On the south side it's Union Street and Allen, on the north side it's Columbia Street and State Street. The reason why we chose the location where we are is because Columbia Street is on the state route. It's on the State truck route. There's no parking on Columbia Street. This is why the municipal lot is so important. We do not impede any of the traffic on</p>



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				<p>Warren Street. And in fact, the Warren Street traffic is so congested it is not conducive to car traffic, which is why the Columbia Street side is more permissible. With that being said, you have a whole side of the City of Hudson that that looks like me who had really paid the price of the war on drugs and no one is being hired from there no one is receiving any kind of compensation from companies, cannabis or not. Those that community is being left behind and the only people that has the power to help them move forward is you and we as a company we wrote a comprehensive business plan that would provide youth development, financial literacy. This is all the things that are needed to move that community forward, which is why the Mayor and the Council, stood up and said that we support this group, is because they know that that community in the City of Hudson is being left behind. And that location we had, they also know is on the northern side of the city, which would really feed to that community. And the reason why the community is losing customers is because they're driving to Berkshire. That's why the numbers are as high as it. Thank you.</p>
8.	Lance	Weinert	Pike and Griff LLC	<p>Hi, I'm Lance with Pike and Griff. We were approved today. We're out of Jamestown, NY. I was coming here today just to let everybody know that's still waiting in the queue. It is a long wait. I applied in the CAURD round and ultimately was denied and had reapplied and kept my team together and strong, worked with my city and made sure everything was on the up and up for when this day came. So I just wanted to say from the beginning when I applied until now, the communication between the examiners like Alex with OCM and whatnot has extremely changed in a good factor. I mean, when I first applied, I couldn't get any phone calls, any emails returned. Now, I was able to get quick responses and solid information when I needed it and requested. So I did wanna reach out and just let everybody know they are trying, the time will come. It's just a waiting game. It's New York State for us.</p>



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Table with 5 columns: ID, Name, Title, Company, and Content. Row 9: ID 9, Name Max, Title Freed, Company FRMIDA LLC d/b/a Zuuld, Content: Hi, I'm Max Freed. My business partner, Jaclynn Pehota, the Executive Director of the Licensed Retail Cannabis Council of British Columbia, also plans to submit comments. To quote her briefly, if you don't compete with the illicit market on price, quality, and availability, the illegality itself is not enough to turn the market to you for most of the customers. My view dovetails with hers. First, that low and slow is a good dosing strategy for a new user. It's a bad strategy in a fight to the death with the market five times bigger than we are. Yet, regardless of the decision made over the CAB letter through which OCM is currently laundering its push for early license caps, OCM has already gotten the sluggish rollout it wants. The Friday afternoon guidance document ambush failed to impose its license caps but it was reported in the press that OCM only hired enough staff to process that tiny handful of licenses. And OCM's regulatory structure front loads the compliance work as a prerequisite for operating. Adding the adjunctions, we already have our low and slow rollout. On top of that, the refusal to accept provisional licenses for non micro suppliers was the set up for a one two punch where the letter now attempts to kill almost all of the applying small businesses. Our assembly leader just told Jeffrey Hoffman in a public broadcast that she thinks that even if there's going to be a cap, we're not anywhere near it. So why is OCM defying clear and unambiguous legislative intent? On what evidence? OCM seems to be equating the greater project of equity with quote, protecting the value of issued licenses. This is just another policy assertion by the office with no basis in the law or control Board action. But again, OCMs achieve their goal of creating taxi medallions. A paper micro license is currently for sale by an out of state enterprise for \$550,000. This barrier to entry at the worst of both worlds, too expensive for small businesses to pay for, but not big enough to create generational wealth. It's turned our work to build a legal marketplace into a lottery payday. And by the way, what happened to that taxi medallion system? And what happened to those small entrepreneurs,



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Table with 5 columns: ID, Name, Last Name, Business Name, and Description. Row 10: 10, Neema, Wiggins, Take N Toke, My name is Neema Wiggins. I'm here today as justice-involved individual and founder of Take N Toke, a provisional CAURD licensee. Take and Toke has leased the iconic former medical dispensary in Midtown, Manhattan at a great expense. It is all pre-built as a cannabis store and ready to reopen quickly. We submitted a PCA waiver request nearly three months ago and have confirmed with the OCM that we have no deficiencies. Yet, for some reason, our PCA waiver has not been on the agenda today. My journey has not been easy. As someone directly impacted by the war on drugs, I entered the CAURD program with the hope of building a legitimate business, creating, opportunity in my community and being a part of a new, more equitable cannabis industry. I put everything I have into this. Every day that passes without progress on our PCA waiver puts this dream in all my hopes for future at risk. We have done everything possible to make sure Take and Toke's PCA waiver request complies with all the applicable guidance and regulations. I have engaged with local community board and elected officials, and we are wanted in our community. I fully understand that the location rules are in place to protect the integrity of the market, ensuring that business operate with an opportunity to succeed. The inclusion of the PCA waiver process and the regulations reflect as a recognition that equity demands flexibility. That each proposed location deserves a case-by-case review, especially in a dynamic and evolving market. Unfortunately, the current lack of transparency and delay of reviewing our PCA request has left us on the verge of collapse. We are fully committed to complying with all requirements, ensuring that our presence is consistent with both the letter and spirit of regulations. We're running out of time, money, and cannot afford to have this decision delayed any longer. We simply cannot withstand further delays and request that. At the conclusion of the public comment period, the CCB reconvene and consider approve of PCA request. I'm



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Table with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells followed by text 'ready, committed to make this work...'. Row 2: '11.', 'Don', 'DeBerardinis', and a long text block starting with 'Hi, my name is Donald DeBerardinis...'.



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Table with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells. Row 2: 12, Jeffrey, Hoffman, [Text: Good afternoon. My name is Jeffrey Hoffman. I'm an attorney here in New York City. I want to thank the Board for my clients whose licenses you acted on today. We very much appreciate that. I work and represent a number of groups that I'm either on the Board or work with, including the Cannabis Justice and Equity Initiative and New York Cannabis Retailers Association. You've heard some of the concerns that these organizations have in common. I just want to repeat some of them today. Obviously, you've heard plenty today about the December queue. I do think it is imperative that we get more clarity and more openness about what is happening and what will happen with the December queue. I really encourage the Board to make that available to everyone by the next meeting. This is something we've talked about for a long time, and you can see the anger and the concern in the room and I just, I would appreciate it. I have plenty of clients on that list and I just think everyone would appreciate that clarity. Similarly, I've said at some previous meetings that we believe there were a number of applications that were incorrectly voided. We've not heard a lot about that in recent times. So we really need to follow up with that again. I know we've been waiting on the PLMA regs. I think it's the second or third iteration of those. Obviously you've got a lot of retailers already doing the stuff that's going to then be allowed in those regs. I just think we got to get that out there. Obviously, you've given a lot of consideration to the proximity protection items today. This is a big concern. I do think early in the market, you have to be very careful about letting stores congregate. Obviously, it's going to be a case-by-case basis, but I really think we have to very carefully consider what is allowed. If you start letting stores overlap, they are going to begin to just cannibalize each other. Your own data shows that as you open more stores, they



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				<p>start to cannibalize other stores sales. If they're too close together, it's gonna even be more cannibalization. And we clearly don't want that. The last thing I wanna say is that we, I wanna report to the Board that we had a very successful medical cannabis lobby day on March 11th. Three bills that we need your support on, the assembly numbers on them are A4744, A4764, and A6709, I'm out of time, so I'll let you all look those up, but very important medical cannabis bills, we gotta get passed. Thank you very much.</p>
13.	Hamid	Ardebeli	iDispenseNYC	<p>Hello, everyone. I'm not great at speaking in front of everybody, but I'm going to try my best. Good afternoon, everyone, distinguished members of the Cannabis Control Board, Madam Chair. My name is Hamid Ardebii, a proud social economic equity licensee under iDispenseNYC. I appear before you today not just as a licensee, but as someone who has invested everything into building a compliant community base cannabis business. Over the past year and a half, I have faced what I can only describe as the most difficult and emotionally exhausting chapter of my life, both professionally and personally. From the very beginning of this process, I have encountered multiple critical errors from the Office of Cannabis Management that have had devastating consequences. My applications was wrongfully denied at first, and error later acknowledged. Yet, by then I had lost my initial saving and the viable retail location I had secured. Despite the setback, I preserved the dedicating months to identifying a new location that met all OCM's criteria, performing exhaustive due diligence and negotiating a lease. Terms with a landlord who had several other interested dispensary tenants. So it went from 12,000, 14,000 16,000 18,000 to 20,000 in a matter of two weeks. After extensive searching and relying on OCM's own location viability map, local.cannabis.ny.gov, and after consulting with top New York Cannabis Attorney, I secured a space at 653 9th Avenue, Manhattan, believing it to be the full compliance with 1,000-foot buffer rule. However, my address amended submission was rejected just yesterday after two weeks of submitting it. Citing a potential conflict with another dispensary located</p>



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				at 701 8th Avenue. When I personally reviewed the OCM on published map, I found that 701 8th Avenue does not fall within 1000-foot protected radius.
14.	Robert	Griffiths	Gotham	<p>Good morning, everyone. My name is Robert Griffiths, and I am a bud tender. I am also a permanently and totally disabled veteran. I have worked as a bud tender for four years and worked as a social services case manager prior to that. I currently run a cannabis influencer IG account under the handle Brooklyn Bud tender. On March 17th, I was unlawfully terminated by Joanne Wilson at her Gotham Brooklyn Domino Sugar Refinery location. I have recorded audio of this event. Five days prior to my termination, I was removed from the sales floor and was escorted to an abandoned floor of the sugar refinery by Chief Executive officer, Kenny Anderson and Vice President of retail, Daniel Portner. Marta Musk-Jewewski, the head of HR, was waiting for me there, where the first question asked to me was, did I like working there? This sent a chilling factor to me and my colleagues. I was fired on the 17th. On April 1st, the Williamsburg team demanded recognition through the Labor Peace Agreement. Not only is Joanne Wilson not recognizing, she is suing the State of New York in federal court to get rid of the LPA requirement entirely. On April 15th, after the 14-day period passed with no recognition, the team petitioned for an election with the NLRB. Two days ago, Joanne Wilson took her legal team into Williamsburg and threatened her workers by holding them captive audience meetings. Many of these workers are young and have never experienced anything like this before. Joanne has tried to silence me after being fired by sending me a cease-and-desist letter, accusing me of being an abhorrent racist. I have filed multiple unfair labor practices with the NLRB, but this process will take some time. I am here to tell the Board that Joanne Wilson is weak and cares nothing about New York workers, let alone her own employees. I am providing my affidavit that I have given to the NLRB so that you may use it when defeating Mrs. Wilson in federal court. Thank you for your time.</p>
15.	Igor	Kotlyar	Smelly Nelly	<p>Good afternoon, my name is Igor Kotlyar. I'm with Smelly Nelly, LLC. I want to address Mrs. Wright, you directly, if possible. Our store has been ready to open</p>



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Table with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells followed by a long text block starting with 'for the last four months. We submitted everything that the OCM asked for...'. Row 2: '16.', 'Oscar', 'Moronta', 'Stoic Stoners', followed by a text block starting with 'Good afternoon, my name is Oscar Moranta...'



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells followed by text 'won't expect us to deviate from the initial plan...'. Row 2: 17., Kevin, Dunn, Domenica62, followed by a long text block starting with 'Good afternoon. Kevin Dunn, a licensed CAURD holder...'.



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: taken seriously immediately. Thank you for letting me speak. Row 2: 18. Paul Presendieu Sustainable Processing Solutions Thank you so much, Honorable Chairwoman and members of the Board, and thank you all for joining for this important meeting. My name is Paul Presendieu. I am the co-founder and Chief Sustainability Officer of Sustainable Process and Solutions. We are a minority owned company filed as residents. My father is here as well, the Chairman and CEO of our company. We're residents in a community to support the impact of the war on drugs. Our mission statements to make sure that we bridge the intersection between cannabis industry and our climate agenda in New York state. Our honorable Chair was also a member of the assembly who supported the climate leadership and community protection act where we have an ambitious agenda to be at 70% renewable by 2030 and 100% carbon free emission by 2040. We have been doing incredible work that's been supported by the Chair in supporting the intersection of dialogs that we've been doing. He supported a program that we did on the intersection of black and total health care and nurses in the cannabis industry and also program we've done with the Office of Cannabis Management to support sustainability dialog as well too. We had a program that featured Alejandro Alvarez, who is the sustainability Chair for the Cannabis Advisory Board and also Raya Salster, who's a member of the New York State Climate Action Council to make sure that we're bridging the divide of bringing the subject matter experts in sustainability to show what the cannabis industry can do and should do. And we're a little bit of a crosser right now because we are doing incredible programming in partnership with the New York State Association of Conservation Commissions and we wanna make sure that we're doing this the appropriate way. We are in the December queue and we wanna to make sure that if we're going unprecedented programming, it is in alignment of making sure that we are able to ethically and righteously be in this space because we are waiting responses to know what we're doing. But in parallel time, we just want to make sure that we're not creating a bottleneck or gatekeeper to need information. And I'm saying this out of respect that everything you've done, especially Chief of Staff Usher, I remember when I was in



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells, text: college, when I was the chair of the SUNY Student Assembly Sustainability Committee... Row 2: 19., David, Feder, Weed Law, text: Hi, everybody. Thank you to the Board. Thank you for the PCA waiver considerations today...



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				<p>applied for the license who were confirmed by the Department of Health, who were evaluated as being for the proper people to hold a medical license, selling medical medicine to people. It's not about just how much money you can make. It's now in the hand of a multi-state operator at Canopy USA now. The OCM has confirmed that the FOIL requests have been falsely, not falsely have been inappropriately withheld. We're waiting for the documents that this license was fraudulently transferred and you have this trade practices bureau. I mean, this is the key issue right here that should fall into the trade practices of bureau. Hey, look, had this license change hands, it never got prior written approval from the department and there's something going on here. So I know that this state is very focused on trying to take care of the organization is trying to make sure that everything is fair for the people and not being taken over by major corporations. We thank you for the work that you're doing. We thank for creating this trade practice bureau. We really request you evaluate this and disclose the FOIL request that we've been waiting for. Thanks for all the work you're doing. Good luck with everybody else here also. And guys, you all rock. People, the people make this industry. You guys stay strong. The gods of all the licenses will come out and everyone will get their own license soon. God bless America.</p>
20.	Tami	Garcia	Tastee of NY	<p>Yes, good afternoon. Good afternoon to everyone here. I know why we all here. We're all here for the same reason. Right? Where we at as far as that December queues. Just want to introduce myself. My name is Tami. I'm a legacy holder, a disabled VA, manager and a political advocate for the NAACP. Our brand is Tastee of NY and our mission is to help disabled veterans. I would like to say that I have heard back from OCM and thank you. After several emails, I want to say nine times that I've emailed and called. I've also reached out to a couple of political advocates to get in contact with you guys and I want thank you for your response. The response I did receive, however, was quite disappointing as I was just told that we don't know where we're at as far as these applications are concerned, that there's only four people working in the office, you're overworked, and you don't know when anything's going to happen, which I think is pretty unfair, as we were promised</p>



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				<p>over a year and a half ago that we would have our licenses within the first six months of our applications. At this point, to say that we don't know where things are is a poor infrastructure problem on your behalf, as right now we live in a world of technology. A central help desk could be created for the OCM where emails, phone calls could come in, and that way applicants can be addressed as far as their status is concerned. There is no way in 2025 you can tell me that there isn't any technology that can centralize and take these calls. People are spending millions of dollars. I know personally for myself being a legacy hold I've put over out of my own pocket \$250,000 and I currently have right now a store that is currently in pending status. We're actually paying rent of \$2,200 a month. This has been going on for the past six months. I know just give you guys a little bit of a background, I have contacted the VA on this and you know in the past, that the VA has already been dragged into this and we don't want that to happen again. So I'm asking clearly, please, please, please, just improve your process, improve your infrastructure so that we all don't have to be throwing away money here. Thank you.</p>
21.	Joshua	Tepperberg	The J Suite NYC	<p>Hi, my name is Joshua Tepperberg. I'm a December queue applicant, MICR 2023-000956. I'm here to say that the folks like myself, and a lot of other people in the room here in the December queue, we deserve the right to have our applications reviewed. People like myself, I'm the CCTM graduate, technical assistance provider, helped a lot people apply for their licenses. Watching them get their licenses and watching all of this go out and just, you know, it's not a good feeling to be on the sidelines when you see it going on. A lot of us have a lot invested. I know you've heard the threats of the lawsuits and everything else coming up. We don't, it's a promise. We don' wanna have to do this. You know, the way the licensing was rolled out in the beginning, the way it was supposed to be, we're just asking that we know it's been changed along the road, so why not review us all. We're a bunch of provisional licenses. Let us have the opportunity to go out and fight for our rights. Thank you.</p>
22.	David	Nicponski	Freshly Baked NYC	<p>Good afternoon. I'm David Nicponski, a licensee from Freshly Baked NYC and Board member of the New</p>



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				<p>York Cannabis Retail Association. First, I want to raise an issue that's been ongoing for years now. Enforcement against unlicensed shops is failing. Our store opened nearly a year ago. Since then, more illegal shops are operational around us than when we opened our doors, not fewer. Only one of the closest 13 has been shut down during the last year, and that was for 12 hours on April 18th. By the next morning, it was open again and was still open on 420, as were the other dozen closest illegal shops, operating without consequence on the biggest industry shopping day of the year. This is insane, and our experience is not unique. Nearly two-thirds of whole respondees reported the same results, the same number or more unlicensed shops operating around them. Meanwhile, the Board is entertaining and improving PCA and other waiver excursions into licensed retailers' operating zones, that's insanity. Brings us to the second issue, PCA regulations and approvals. Behind the lack of sustained enforcement, this is the most consequential issue facing retail licensees. PCA rule changes are still under public comment and yet you're not only considering but also approving proximity incursion requests. Despite the overwhelming public opposition to the prior reg proposals and of PCA waivers being easily granted in general, this is crazy. 250 feet away in an approval. How is this demonstrably serving public convenience and advantage? How will the Board demonstrate that decision, that the decision-making process was sound and in compliance with the law and not capricious and arbitrary? The unpredictability caused by this kind of regulatory behavior is damaging to the industry and cripples business planning. As I've said in prior meetings, public comments to date have overwhelmingly supported proximity protection waivers being rare and denied by default. Licensees need to be able to count on the 1,000 to 2,000-foot buffer zones except under exceptional conditions. Exceptions need to be rare and follow a well-defined process with well-defined criteria overcoming the high bar and presumption against the requester. If you want to support public convenience and advantage, make sure existing businesses have a chance of success. And you do that and support the community by enforcing the licensing regulations and shutting</p>
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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells. Row 2: 23, Scheril, Murray Powell Esq., The Ethiopian World Federation Inc, down unlicensed businesses, not approving additional incursions next to existing retailers. Thank you. Good afternoon to the OCM leadership team and to our members of the New York cannabis industry. My name is Scheril Murray-Powell Esquire. I'm a cannabis, agricultural dietary supplement, psychedelics and regulatory attorney, and I've been practicing for 10 years. I am also the president of the Ethiopian World Federation Incorporated Local Charter 12 and member of the Rastafari community. The first thing I want to talk about is my CAURD licensee clients. Many of them are open, and then the ones who are not open are working with the examiner team at the OCM. So, I just wanted to highlight a couple of those individuals working really hard to help, my clients get final licensure. So, Lee and Stephanie at the OCM, they've been really helpful and have made lists for my clients so that they can kind of check off the things that they need to be compliant. For my November queue clients, all of them have received their licenses. They've gone through their standard of review. So again, thank you to the OCM for that, including my license, which is for Conurban NY. With regards to December queue, you know, that's where most of my Rastafari brothers and sisters are. My legacy operators are there. So I'm just waiting for us to get the opportunity to help to build a robust, high-performing cannabis industry for the State of New York and join the other licensees who are participating. I really want to highlight the work of John Kagia as far as the analytics that we got an opportunity to see today and his team. I'm sure he didn't do it by himself but that it is so rare that you get to see that breakdown by brand, by type of product, by even showing where there's cannibalization, you know, what stores are able to sell through their locations based on competition. So, we really do need to appreciate the fact that we have access to that analytical data. I also want to recognize that we now understand how many of our stores are owned by women-owned businesses, minority and women-own businesses, minority-owned business, those are top three categories. So, I just wanted to highlight some things I learned today at this meeting, and then I also wanted to represent my clients who have received good service from the Office of Cannabis



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				<p>Management. To those of you who are waiting, know that you're not waiting alone. There are a lot of people who are here standing with you, ready to support you, so that you can go from the December queue to the licensee pool, okay. Give thanks for the time and blessed love to all.</p>
24.	Oleg	Maryasis		<p>Hi, thank you for the Board for having me. Thank you everybody. It's really heartbreaking to hear all the stories of all the people who are waiting for the licenses very patiently for all this time. I'm just at loss of words for the livelihoods that are being heard throughout this process and I really hope the OCM could do whatever it can to expedite the process for all these people and potential license holders. I just want to be quick, one of the main things I wanted to address is the mold limitations that have been removed a little while ago, a couple of years ago for New York State. Basically, this program is about making products safe and there are no mold limitations currently. I'm not saying that this should be something that they restrict and destroy the already struggling farmers, but there should be some sort of level that is not acceptable or at least that could be looked at because it is dangerous for humans to consume or an inhale mold, so that should be addressed. And the second issue is seed to sale has been a really lagging. I've been in this industry for 13 years. We've been talking about seed to sale for 10, since the medical program came into effect and the lack of seed to sale program is a hindering the operations of the licensed businesses. So, we need that ASAP. Thank you.</p>
25.	Empress Emma	Young	<p>The Ethiopian World Federation Incorporated and Herbs4Life, LLC</p>	<p>Good afternoon. I am Empress Emma Young. I am a December applying as well. However, today I am here representing the Ogs, as I've been in the industry for over 50 years and I'm also representing the Rastafari Community, as we are the communities that developed a business that is there for the licensees at this pleasant time. However, we are not considered as experts. Any industry that you're in, if you're in the business for 50 years, you're considered an expert. Well, I am an expert, and our expertise of the OG and the Rastafari community, we haven't benefited. It's a billion-dollar industry, but we're not benefiting. Now as they say, wait, well, wait broke the wagon. Let's remember that. It is time for fairness, equity for those</p>



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				<p>who have laid down their lives, lost families, lost businesses, there's time for us to receive some of the wealth. Now, some don't want us to come into the industry because we are experts. And when I listen to some of their things and the what would you say, this one lose because another one comes in. If you sell good cannabis, and you service your community correctly, you will benefit. And we must not continue to separate cannabis with culture. This was part of our culture. Of the herbs, we fed the minds, that must all be included in the cannabis. Equity first. Thank you.</p>
26.	Shanduke	McPhatter		<p>Good day, Board, good day, everybody, good day, people online. My name is Shanduke McPhatter. I am a nonprofit leader. I am a licensed CAURD member. I'm also a sitting member of the New York Cannabis Retail Association and I represent Brooklyn, New York. I come in here just in reference today to really speak about the December queue. I am someone who was caught up in the lawsuits in New York City, New York State rather, Brooklyn is my first choice region, so as I understand when the Variscite lawsuit hit, Brooklyn was hit hard, we couldn't move out, and I was caught in that lawsuit until July of 2024 when I finally was able to receive my provisional license and I'm in the process of getting open within these next couple of months. With that being said, the undue stress and harm that I endured with no communication from OCM, from the Cannabis Control Board, while I was waiting to figure out if I would get my license, I don't want to continue to see nobody experience what I experienced, and that is what we are seeing in this December queue. I respect growth. My plan is to grow. I'm not one to hit on nobody's growth, but when you see somebody talking about two, three, and four dispensaries, however, it's happening, and somebody's waiting to get one, we're at a disservice. Let's continue what we said we would do and give people a fair chance. Thank you.</p>
27.	Jesse	O'Neill		<p>Hello. Thank you for your time. I'm Jesse O'Neill. I am a CAURD provisional licensee, and I just wanted to implore the Board and bring it to your attention an upsetting matter that's happened to me recently. I was approved after being denied for two locations, approved on December 13th. Beautiful property in</p>



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				<p>Williamsburg right next to the L&amp;G trains. Had a contingent lease, got proximity protection unequivocally. Two weeks ago on April 8<sup>th</sup>, I received a notification that that was being rescinded, and it said only not because of my mistake, but because the agency had made a quote, error, and they gave me an option. In the meantime, I spent over a quarter million dollars on executing this lease, nonrefundable contractors, developers, architects, et cetera. And so out of the blue, I'm told my proximity protection was denied. I've been trying to contact someone at OCM to find a solution because I want to work with the agency rather than resort to a lawsuit. But those attempts to talk to anyone about this have fallen on deaf ears. So, you know, I'm imploring OCM and the Board to be aware of my situation and work with me to bring it back. I mean, I was taking off, I was on the map, and I was taken off. It seems completely arbitrary and no one is explaining anything to me and I'd love to work together towards a resolution. Thank you for your time.</p>
28.	Willa	Smiley	<p>Wellness Options ReSources Transform Health, Corp. (W.O.R.T.H.)</p>	<p>Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Willa Smiley. I am a registered nurse, and I am also, last time I spoke, I was doing my research and now I'm finished. I'm a doctor of nursing practice. I did my research, of course, on cannabis, and I want to speak to, just put some stuff out there. Number one, to the Office of Medical Cannabis. My focus is seniors, and I know you have a medical cannabis senior program. What I really want to say in terms of the research is nice. You know, you put it on nice, shiny papers, the numbers look good, but, as epidemiologists, how is this getting into the hands of the people? Number one, so some of my research I just want to talk about in terms of age data, my participants were patients who were patients of nurse practitioners who were in private practice because what I really wanted to see was how are the seniors getting, how are seniors using cannabis. I didn't get any data from past six and probably for a lot of reasons based on you know seniors are probably on Medicaid who's helping them and his private practice and so on. I know that you all have data your data goes all the way up to almost up to 80 because I wanted to go up to 100. My point being is that particular age group. What's happening to them? What's really happening with them in terms of the</p>



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				<p>data? Do they really know that they don't have to smoke? Are they able to get the bombs and so on? Do they know that can go to their provider and talk? And the people that take care of them, because these are the people that need taking care of their seniors. They're caregivers. Do the caregivers know that they can help their patients with cannabis? How do they get the cannabis? How do they get down to the medical centers? Going back to the data, what are we doing with the data in terms what you know the part of this supply chain? What are the patients using? What are the strands? What are the flowers, which translates down to your growers and so on. Even though you know I'm specifically okay in the medical cannabis space but still what are you what what's your highest selling product so the growers can make sure that we're meeting the demand of these people? And thank you thank you. The research, I'm just comparing, but really interested in terms of pain, of course, is always number one. And you all have pain, I had pain, even the National Council of State Boards of Nursing had pain. One thing that I got in terms, my research that's not in yours in terms of your, the efficacy of what's usable was my brain. So, I just thought that was interesting. I put that out there. But anyways, I would love to talk to any and everybody because I want to go to somebody's farm.</p>
29.	Leonard	Daniels		<p>Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Leonard Daniels. I am a graphic designer and creative consultant that is available to work. The number is 929-496-6876. Please do reach out to me. I do web design, social media management, 3D printing, photography, videography, animation, AR, VR. I'm an AI specialist that can visualize your metrics. I create custom music, sounds, apparel design, event management, and trade show group design. I have packages that will legitimize the look and presentation of your business. My rates are reasonable. With that said, please make sure that you get my business card before you leave today and let's create stuff that's great. The OCM needs a graphical representation of the applicant's current status, indicating change over time.</p>
30.	Lori	Denman	Best NY Developments LLC	<p>Hi, everybody. My name is Lori Denman, and I'm the owner of Best NY Developments LLC. It's also known as Edge Off NYC. I'm joined by my husband, who is</p>



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells. Row 2: 31, Roberto, Fatone, One 4 All Securities Inc., [transcript text]



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Table with 5 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells. Row 2: 32, Elisha, Vazquez, Str8 Gas NYC LLC, acknowledgement that my location was likely to be approved or rejected but received no such information. As a result. I couldn't provide any information to my investors and landlord and now I'm forced to find another location. Given the date of the expiration of my in-process provisional status, this fourth attempt will likely be my last attempt to activate a store. I cannot afford to go through this process again without proper communication with the OCM. Given my experiences to this point, is there any confirmation from the Board they will look into this matter further so people in my situation are not continuing waste time and money securing these locations when there's no certainty of a response or timeline. I feel the provisional and CAURD licenses should be treated with more priority by the office, especially when we have committed financially to a location. I have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars and am waiting just for a response. I'm asking for better OCM communication and answers promptly when asked. I have a great team and a strong business background, but there's no recipe. Thank you for letting me speak.



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Table with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: Empty cells. Row 2: 33, Tamika, Dunkley, [Text about Season Gives and cannabis industry equity]



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				<p>of access is not just delay, it is erasure. It is a quiet way of saying, you do not belong here. And the message, whether intentional or not, undermines everything that the social equity program is meant to stand for. We will continue to amplify these voices and we will continue to train, educate, and support social equity entrepreneurs, but we cannot do this alone. The policy must match the promise. Intent must meet the implementation. Thank you.</p>
34.	Jeff	Emerson	ChenCanna	<p>Hello, I'm Jeff Emerson, Vice President of ChenCanna. Speaking on our behalf as a Tier One Indoor Cultivator applicant with licenses for Processing and Distribution. We ask the office to consider these important factors as it pertains to its stated intention of slowing cultivation licensing until further assessment following the Fall 2025 outdoor harvest. Outdoor crops in New York are subject to seasonal growing conditions which vary year to year and region to region. Production will be variable in quality and quantity, making it unreliable to use as a primary criteria for evaluating supply. Outdoor cultivation relies on inputs beyond the growers' control, suggesting a balance of cultivation types including further licensing of Tier One Indoor cultivators is essential to provide steady production throughout the year and establish a reliable supply chain. Gaging capacity on one year's outdoor harvest overemphasizes a single means of production. About a quarter of all licensed cultivation capacity is allocated to Registered Organizations with a hundred thousand square feet of indoor flowering canopy available to each. This represents an oversized allocation of available indoor capacity going to large multistate operators instead of local entrepreneurs. As stated in the CAB's year-end summary for 2024, it is expected that not all RO's will utilize their indoor cultivation capacity. Of those that do, none are expected to utilize all one hundred thousand square feet available. Some may not use their cultivation capacity and choose to only process and or distribute, and vice versa. Making the RO's actual indoor production for the rec market impossible to predict. Yet it represents a full quarter of the current total licensed cultivation capacity, and most of the indoor capacity. As the office's Trade Practices Bureau succeeds in reducing out-of-state product inversion, new in-state production will be needed to replace it.</p>



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				<p>Coupled with anticipated demand from added retail licensing, and new demand from expanding consumer interest in cannabis, continued licensing of Tier One Indoor Cultivators is necessary to ensure in-state supply can meet future demand. Indoor Tier One Cultivators represent a small fraction of total capacity and licensing them now contributes no risk to oversaturation. Tier One Indoor Cultivator applicants with licenses for Processing and Distribution should be exempt from any slowing of cultivation licensing. Regardless of this year’s outdoor growing conditions, or how much indoor flower the RO’s produce, or how successful the office is at curtailing inversion, applicants such as ChenCanna should not be delayed pending further assessment of supply, as the distribution and processing licenses were designed to be connected to the Tier One Cultivator license. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this public comment.</p>
35.	Catalina	Cruz	<p>Assembly Member, NYS Assembly</p>	<p>Written Testimony for OCM, April 24th        Re: Proposed Dispensary at 81-02 37th Avenue, Jackson Heights, NY</p> <p>Thank you Office of Cannabis Management and members of the Cannabis Control Board for the opportunity to submit written testimony today. I am Assemblymember Catalina Cruz, and I represent the communities of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, Corona, Middle Village, and Rego Park in Queens, NYC. I’m submitting this written testimony regarding the application for a dispensary at 81-02 37th Avenue. I want the record to reflect my strong opposition to this application as it is just under 200 feet from both the front entrance of the Renaissance Charter School and our local public library. This dispensary and others like it should not be allowed to open in such close proximity to schools and other community locations where children regularly frequent.</p> <p>Our community initially raised concerns last summer, when Best Fala of Three Birds Retail LLC applied for a cannabis license at this location. My office immediately contacted OCM and the Governor’s office. In October of the same year, the Renaissance School submitted a letter opposing that proposal to Community Board 3, which later voted to oppose it. A month later, in November, I joined Councilmember</p>



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				<p>Shekar Krishnan in writing a formal letter in opposition to this application sent to OCM, urging the office to take action.</p> <p>Despite significant community and local elected opposition, an application for a license for a cannabis dispensary is still pending at this location. The awning is already up, displaying its name. Outfitting of the shop has already begun, and the community is understandably alarmed. Parents and teachers have repeatedly contacted my office asking how this is even possible.</p> <p>While part of the issue lies in a loophole in the law, the Board nevertheless should take action now. As you know, state law prohibits dispensaries within 500 feet of a school—but because the Renaissance Charter School is located in a mixed-use building, not one zoned solely as a school, that rule doesn't currently apply. The Board and Office should note that I am currently working with my colleagues in support of legislation that would close this loophole and ensure that any building that houses a school is treated with the same protections.</p> <p>However, we cannot wait for this legislation to pass and be signed by the Governor. The time to act is now. OCM and the Board have the discretion—and the responsibility—for immediate action. You have the authority to deny this application based on proximity to the school and overwhelming community opposition.</p> <p>I voted in support of the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act. I believe in legalization, and in building a cannabis market that's equitable and reparative. But legalization doesn't mean blindly permitting the opening of dispensaries without guardrails. We can support economic justice and still say: not next to a school, not next to a library. These two principles about fairness can coexist.</p> <p>We want the cannabis industry to succeed—we want to see it thrive, especially in communities that have been disproportionately harmed by the war on drugs. But its success cannot come at the expense of the very communities it's meant to uplift. Responsible</p>
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				<p>growth means centering community voices, especially when it comes to protecting our children.</p> <p>This is about trust. Our community has done its part. We've raised our concerns through the proper channels. We've provided documentation, letters, and a clear record of opposition with just cause. Now, the Board and OCM must truly partner with our community in this matter. While we are supportive of an equitable and reparative cannabis industry, it cannot compromise the safety and wellbeing of our children. We urge the Board to deny this license and thank you for your time and attention.</p>
36.	Murphy	Connor		<p>I believe that it would be in the NYS OCM's best interest if they stopped handicapping and severely limiting the medical program in terms of how medical dispensaries can advertise in relation to: a medical dispensary's physical location, the medical program itself and the physicians who are known to do the certification process, and the locations that medical dispensaries can advertise their existence at. The regulations for the medical program should more closely resemble the regulations for adult-use. Anything less than this IS discriminatory against the medical program and its patients, and the continuation of these discriminatory limitations WILL be met with the proper justice proceedings. Either the medical program should be able to advertise in exactly the same ways the adult-use program can, or the adult-use program needs to get handicapped to the same level that the medical program has been handicapped. Step up and do the right thing, OCM, while your positions are still un-elected. Your actions today WILL influence the outcomes of the future elections once the OCM positions become elected officials.</p>
37.	Paul	Presendieu	Sustainable Processing Solutions	Supporting programming for the intersection between cannabis and environmental sustainability as a license applicant.
38.	William	Gariti		<p>Why are you giving multiple licenses to 1 business to open multiple stores? I've seen flynnstoned company open in 2 other nys locations and yet they are trying a 3rd in Rochester? Also, why is ocm not refunding my application fee if they are prohibited from processing my application due to h recent lawsuit? I want my</p>



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				money back of ocm stepped beyond its boundaries when they collected my application fee
39.	Evangelos	Kyriazopoulos	Garden of Hemp	I feel that NY has endured much stigmatization For crimes behind the plant! I want New Yorkers to experience a potent high on a legal basis and the answer is hemp grown .30 % under the us farm bill of 2018 on a 24 hour 6 days a week smoking accessory edibles and live rosin vape pens and flower strains beyond belief!
40.	Pedro	Martinez	Tropicalfeeling	Please don't forget about the social justice applicant
41.	Alfred	Bristel	Farmingdale State College	I finished the Cannabis Management and Production certification at Farmingdale State College. How can I get involved in the cannabis industry?
42.	Dewayne	Richardson		What happened to the people who were and who got incarcerated for selling marijuana? Getting their license is first through the board because I applied and your office never got back to me. I'm talking about in the beginning. My God, didn't even have your system. Put together yet. I still haven't heard anything back from you.
43.	Joe	Teeman		The governor of ny has stated that she wants these ilegal cannabis shops shut down and I know a lot of the licensed shops do to i was wondering if there is anyway you can do something I've let the state police know about an ilegal smoke shop selling cannabis plus other stuff like shrooms and other stuff and the ny governor is there box and they do nothing the place is in Whitney point ny on route 11 called the smoke shop and you can't get in unless you have one of their cards the woman that owns it goes to NYC buys a bunch of flower brings it back and package it in different bags that say different flavors when actually it is all the same and the silver bags are infused with the smell none of this flower has been tested or checked so god only knows what you are smoking and it's people like this that will ruin it for other people and take away business from licensed shops not to mention they are selling untested flower which people are going to think they all do this this place needs to be shut down like I said not just selling flower very shady place
44.	Julia	Foster	CB01 Brooklyn	I would like to know during the interviews for OCAM applicants. What are the list of requirements Are we allowed to ask from the applicant? Also, how far are they to be away from schools churches, play areas, community centers, and daycare's thirdly how many



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				cannabis stores could be in the same vicinity or block? And my fourth question how much of the Opinion the community And the community board does OCM recognize
45.	Edward	Glickman	Riverbend Dispensary	<p>Dear members of the Cannabis Control Board. My name is Edward Glickman, and I am one of the co-owners of Riverbend Dispensary in Hudson, NY. I am writing this comment because the waiver request from Blaze NY LLC feels like a betrayal of everything we were told and everything we relied on when we invested our life savings to open our Dispensary.</p> <p>I am a CAURD licensee. I applied back in 2022, long before the regulations were even drafted, and I was told that if I received a license, I would be protected by a 2000 foot buffer from other dispensary's in a city the size of Hudson.</p> <p>That proximity protection was not just a policy detail, it was a promise from the OCM &amp; CCB. It gave me the confidence to put my retirement money on the line and open a business in the Hudson Community.</p> <p>We have worked incredibly hard to build a compliant, community focused dispensary that could survive in the tough NYS market.</p> <p>If this waver is granted and another dispensary is allowed just 324 feet from our front door, it won't just undercut our business, it will jeopardize our ability to stay open. We were told that NYS, would give us a fair shot. I am asking you today to please honor that commitment that was given to us by the NYS, the OCM &amp; the CCB.</p> <p>Thank you,        Edward Glickman        Riverbend Dispensary        Hudson, NY</p>
46.	Robert	Huston	Riverbend Dispensary	<p>Hello, my name is Robert Huston. I am the property owner at 531 Warren Street and a co-owner of Riverbend Dispensary with Edward Glickman. When we decided to open Riverbend, I closed my prior business and invested significantly in transforming my building into a cannabis dispensary. Something I did with full faith in the process and with the protections that CAURD licensees were told would be in place. The 2,000 foot proximity buffer wasn't theoretical, it was a key factor in our decision making. I understand that the regulations allow for wavier requests but that does not change the fact that we relied in good faith</p>



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				<p>on the promises the OCM and the CCB made to us when we were making substantial financial, personal and professional commitments.</p> <p>Approving this wavier would effectively nullify the protections that gave us the confidence to invest in the dispensary in the first place.</p> <p>Riverbend isn't a hypothetical business. We are real people who live and work in Hudson. We have created jobs, paid our taxes and have followed every regulation the office has put in front of us. All we are asking is a fair chance to operate in the environment we were promised, and not to be undermined by a new dispensary just 324 feet away.</p> <p>I respectfully urge you to deny this waiver application.</p> <p>Thank you for your time        Robert Huston        Riverbend Dispensary</p>
47.	Sophie	Yalkezian		<p>Sophie Yalkezian and Brendon Clark        526 Columbia St.        Hudson, NY 12534        sophieyalkezian@gmail.com        April 18, 2025        City of Hudson City Hall        520 Warren Street        Hudson, NY 12534</p> <p>Dear Mayor and City Council Members,</p> <p>We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed cannabis dispensary "Blaze," which is planned to open at 517-519 Columbia Street—directly across from our home at 526 Columbia Street. We are young homeowners who purchased our house in 2022 with the intention of settling down and investing long-term in Hudson. The value of our property—both financially and as a safe place to build our future—is deeply important to us, and we are very concerned that this dispensary will negatively impact both.</p> <p>Our concerns mirror many of those already raised by other residents and property owners in the area, and we would like to add our voices in support of preserving the safety, character, and long-term stability of our neighborhood. The specific concerns we want to highlight include:</p> <p>1. Proximity to Columbia Opportunities, Inc. (COI):        The proposed dispensary is located</p>



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Table with 5 columns and 1 row. The fifth column contains text regarding COI, parking, traffic safety, security, neighborhood character, and distance regulations.



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				<p>Hudson’s population, this appears to violate the Office of Cannabis Management’s requirement for a minimum 2,000-foot distance between such establishments in communities of this size.</p> <p>While we recognize that cannabis dispensaries have a place in the broader economic and social landscape, we firmly believe this particular location is unsuitable. We urge the City Council to consider the broader, long-term impact on residential property owners like ourselves and deny approval for this dispensary at 517-519 Columbia Street.</p> <p>We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns in more detail at an upcoming City Council meeting or any scheduled public hearing. Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely,      Sophie Yalkezian and Brendon Clark      526 Columbia St.      Hudson, NY 12534</p>
48.	Evelyn	Zapata	The New York Cannabis Times Corp.	<p>The December Cue must be reviewed. Not reviewing the December Cue or announcing no December cue review adds up to legal damages which I intend to pursue. The lobby list petition, is a threat to shut down the December cue adds upto damages. Including myself we have 51 plaintiffs in a lawsuit. I am begging NY state to call my bluff.</p>
49.	Sierra	Murray		<p>When can we expect an answer on our application being approved or not?</p>
50.	Sean	Lustberg	Mottz Authentic New York Style LLC	<p>I am reaching out to you today with a sense of urgency, frustration, and desperation regarding the current situation with our dispensary (OCMCAURD-2022-000400 / Mottz Only Authentic New York Style LLC) in the Town of Southampton. After nearly eight exhausting months of back and forth with the town’s planning board, we were finally set to have our site plan application deemed "complete" at tomorrow’s (3/27) meeting. However, we have just received a letter from the Chief Building Inspector, Sean McDermott, that threatens to derail everything we’ve worked so hard for.</p> <p>The planning board had previously referred the matter of St. Rosalie’s Church, located down the block from our proposed location, to the Chief Building Inspector to determine whether the property is zoned as a</p>



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Table with 5 columns and 1 row. The text in the fifth column describes a church's opposition to a dispensary, zoning issues, and the author's financial investment.



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				<p>made it clear that they cannot overturn the Chief Building Inspector’s determination. As a result, we would be forced to go through the zoning board of appeals, which is an 8+ month process. This delay is simply not feasible given the financial and emotional toll this process has already taken. Moreover, there was no objection from the town when we submitted our "Notice of Municipality," further compounding our confusion and frustration.</p> <p>I am pleading with the OCM for your support in this matter. We need someone on our side who can advocate for us and ensure that the state’s guidelines and laws are being properly interpreted and applied. To provide further context:</p> <p>The Town of Southampton’s definition of “school grounds” states:        “School grounds” means any building, structure and surrounding outdoor grounds, including entrances or exits, contained</p>
51.	Elisha	Vazquez	STR8 GAS NYC LLC	I am applicant and part of the social equity December que.
52.	Sonya	Davis-Roberts	Community Board 3 Queens	<p>This Three Birds Cannabis Dispensary 81-02 37th Ave, came before my committee and full board approximately 6 months ago and was voted down mainly for the community’s very strong concerns and objections of its proximity to a Charter school just feet away. Many were also concerned with the saturation of other cannabis shops (legal and illegal) that sprouted up around the area. This is unwanted and unacceptable in our community. We are family oriented community and we don’t need our children exposed to this especially with the lack of safe regulations displayed when rolling these dispensaries out. Thank you.</p>
53.	Sam	Blue		<p>I want to take a moment to acknowledge and uplift the voice of the CEO of Str8 Gas NYC LLC, Elisha Vazquez who is a living example of why social equity in cannabis matters.</p> <p>Elisha served eight years in the New York State justice system for cannabis related charges. His story, and those like his, are exactly why this program was created to prioritize those who were criminalized and marginalized by outdated laws.</p> <p>We’ve watched license after license bypass people like Elisha, while MSOs and subcontracted entities claim their share of the market. It’s disheartening and</p>



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				<p>unfair. For many of us, cannabis is more than a business. It's our history, our hustle, and our future. We've lived this life long before it became legal, and many of us paid the price for it like Elisha. We urge decision makers to truly consider legacy operators the fair opportunity we deserve. It's time for the OCM to review the December que.</p>
54.	Jayson	Tantalo	New York Cannabis Retail Association	<p>I'm writing today on behalf of the many applicants who submitted their cannabis license applications during the December 2023 application period. These individuals and businesses followed the rules, acted in good faith, and committed significant time and resources in pursuit of a fair and legal path into New York's cannabis industry. These applicants continue to face delays, uncertainty, and financial hardship all while watching illicit operators, who openly violated the very rules set by the OCM, continue to operate and, in many cases, transition into the legal market. These illicit operators should not be prioritized over those who followed the legal process and are still waiting in the December queue. It is unacceptable that rule-breakers are being positioned ahead of rule-followers. I stand firmly with those applicants from the December application round. They deserve a fair chance and a level playing field, not to be left behind while enforcement fails and backdoor pathways into the market are quietly rewarded. Last year, the OCM encouraged participation, telling New Yorkers to "get involved." But the infrastructure was not in place to handle the influx of interest, and as a result, hundreds of qualified, rule-abiding applicants are now struggling to survive. Many of them built their plans around potential promises of equity, transparency, and fairness. What we've seen instead is disturbing: November applicants allegedly being awarded licenses based on fraudulent submissions, including proximity locations without valid leases or town opt-ins. That is not the standard we expect from a regulated state market, and it certainly is not what was promised. We urge the OCM to refocus its priorities: enforce the rules, support those who followed them, and ensure that New York's cannabis industry is built on integrity — not shortcuts and favoritism. I know I didnt get any!</p>
55.	Mrs	Valek		<p>Prohibition is a failed policy. For years both parties have complacently offered their own pontifications as</p>



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				to how to up root the drug war. I want it noted that the for profit prison system costs residents both in taxes and humanity. Illicit markets are a threat to NY residents. The safe banking act has yet to pass? We need to stop this expensive drug war. Terrorist like Putin are praying on the world. Decriminalization frees up law enforcement resources and produces revenue. Raw material and innovation await NY's legal Cannabis industry. Cannabis offers economic safety and sanity.
56.	Hopper	G	Str8 Gas	.
57.	Sara	Egan		I want to uplift Elisha Vazquez, CEO of Str8 Gas NYC LLC, as a powerful example of why social equity in cannabis matters. After serving eight years in the New York State justice system for cannabis-related charges, Elisha's story represents exactly why these programs were created — to support those criminalized by outdated laws. Yet, we've seen license after license go to MSOs and subcontracted entities, while people like Elisha are left behind. For many of us, cannabis isn't just a business — it's our history, our hustle, and our future. We've paid the price long before legalization. We call on decision makers to give legacy operators the fair chance we deserve. It's time for the OCM to review the December queue.
58.	James	Ordonez		I'm commenting on behalf of Elisha Vasquez Str8Gas , this person has been a great member of the community. Has helped educate on the medicinal benefits of marijuana and at the same time has given back to the community tremendously. He personally helped educate me on health concerns and risks that come with medicinal marijuana by providing me with the proper literature and has referred me through the proper channels . I see a lot of corporate entities that just don't have the same passion and it upsets me. Please support Str8Gas & it's ceo Elisha Vasquez
59.	Concerned. User	Advocate		I want to take a moment to recognize Elisha Vazquez, the CEO of Str8 Gas NYC LLC, whose story exemplifies why social equity in the cannabis industry is so vital. Elisha spent eight years in the New York State prison system on cannabis-related charges. His journey—and the experiences of many others like him—are the very reason social equity programs were designed: to



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				<p>give priority to those who were criminalized and marginalized by outdated laws.</p> <p>It's been frustrating and disheartening to see license after license awarded to large corporations, while individuals like Elisha continue to be overlooked. For many of us, cannabis is more than just a business; it's woven into our history, our struggles, and our future. We've been part of this culture long before it was legalized, and many of us have paid dearly for it—just like Elisha.</p> <p>We call on decision-makers to take a closer look at the December queue and truly consider the legacy operators who have lived this reality. It's time for us to be given the fair opportunity we've earned. The OCM needs to step up and make it right.</p>
60.	Hemant	Shahi	Ganja bari inc	<p>Review the December Queue for the license OCM</p>
61.	Ramona	Vazquez	Str8 gas nyc	<p>I want to share the profound struggle and hardship I experienced while watching my son endure incarceration for cannabis during a time when it was deemed illegal. Each missed birthday and holiday celebration felt like another piece of my heart had been taken away. On top of this, I was caring for my elderly mother, who was battling Alzheimer's, along with two uncles who faced their own disabilities. My life became a delicate balancing act, working 50 to 60 hours a week while striving to provide the care they needed and longing for the moments I could spend with my son.</p> <p>Every visit to the prison required a long, exhausting journey, filled with anxiety and hope. I found myself constantly worrying about whether my mother and uncles would be okay while I was away. It was a heavy burden to bear, but I held on to the belief that my son was doing everything he could to turn his life around. He was one of the first to fill out the application to obtain his license in the December queue, pouring his heart and soul into this new opportunity.</p> <p>Yet, as I watch the days and weeks pass with no answers, it feels as though he has been forgotten not just by the system, but also by the world that claimed to stand for justice. The glimmers of hope for a brighter future seem to fade, and the dreams we once nurtured together feel like distant memories.</p> <p>But I remain steadfast, advocating for him and all those who have faced similar struggles, believing that</p>



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				<p>one day, we will see the recognition and equity that everyone in this journey deserves.          Sincerely,          Ramona Vazquez</p>
62.	Elizabeth	DeLaBarre		<p>As you meet to approve licenses, I would like you to know that I am sitting in my apartment in midtown Manhattan in a smoke-free building having symptoms due to inhaling second-hand pot smoke. Off and on all day long, my mouth and tongue go numb (it is a neuro-toxin after, that's how it reduces pain), I cough (my body has the wisdom to try to prevent toxic substances from entering further into my respiratory system), have to spit a strange liquid secretion (my mucous membranes are trying to get the oily substance coating my nasal passages and oral cavity out) and feel sedated. Management in my building does their best to find the offenders, but they often cannot. When I open my window to get fresh air, the stench of pot gets blown in from the street. My brother who has asthma, no longer wants to visit me because of how much pot smoke he is forced to inhale when he does, which often leads to a respiratory issue for him. Congestion pricing is another deterrent. Clients feel the same, preferring to meet on zoom so as not to walk past the pot shops and riff raff on their way from port authority to my apartment. And why is there still a shop on 42nd St. East of 9th Ave, when it is across the street from a church and has no license on display? NY has unleashed this drug into a population-dense area and there is no escape, (and in fact, there is injury) for the non-smoker who no longer has a right to breathe air without this neuro-toxin. What will you do to reverse this situation and make NYC livable for the un-stoned?</p>
63.	Neil	Anastasio	Forest Regional Residents' Civic Association	<p>I am the president of the civic association which represents West Brighton, Staten Island. I once again submit to your board our unanimous objection to an adult use cannabis dispensary at the location of 755 Forest Avenue. You have been sent objection letters from the following representatives: District Attorney McMahon, Borough President Fossella, State Senator Scarcella-Spanton, Assemblymember Pirozzolo as well as Community Board 1. A stronger unanimous voice of our community cannot be made. This is the SECOND attempt for a cannabis shop to open at this site and our objections are summarized in detail in all</p>



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				<p>of these letters. Yet your office continues to steer unwitting business owners to this site which is an unwanted business in this overwhelmingly residential community. Out objections are as follows: 1. the site is within 200 feet on the same block as a city run playground which has daycare services for toddlers within the park in their park building. Your office is unaware of this activity is would appear. 2. this property has C2 zoning which is designed "to serve the immediate needs of the surrounding local community. This business has stated publicly that they hope to draw people by car and bus from afar to their shop. 3. This business will adversely impact pedestrian and vehicular traffic on a hugely busy area currently stymied many hours of the day with backed up traffic. 4. this site is close to an intermediate school (IS27) which empties onto this intersection in such volume that local businesses close at dismissal time. 5. perhaps most importantly, since this is a commercial overlay zoning within a residential zone, homes abut this property -- and the undue traffic, noise and loitering that many shops such as these already impart on other residential communities is a hazard to a abutting residences. PLEASE, we unanimously urge you, DO NOT license the site at 755 Forest Avenue, Staten Island. Higher density commercial zones are where these shops belong ! Thank you for your time and attention.</p>
64.	Elisha	Vazquez	STR8 GAS NYC LLC OWNER	<p>My name is Elisha Vazquez, and I represent STR8 GAS NYC LLC ,        I wish to take a moment to shine a spotlight on the resilient CEOs of Nys cannabis companies L, whose journey illustrates precisely why social equity in cannabis is so vital. They bravely endured years of incarceration within the New York State justice system due to cannabis-related charges. The narrative, along with countless others, underscores the mission of this program: to uplift those who have been unjustly criminalized and marginalized by archaic laws. Time and again, we've witnessed licenses being awarded to entities that overlook the contributions of individuals like myself and many others ,while MSOs (Multi-State Operators) and subcontractors seize their share of the market. This reality is not only disheartening but fundamentally inequitable. For many of us, cannabis is far more than a mere business; it represents our legacy, our resilience, and</p>



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				<p>our aspirations. We were part of this world long before it was legalized, often at a great personal cost, just like we all did.</p> <p>We call upon decision-makers to genuinely recognize the value of legacy operators and to provide them with the fair opportunities they deserve. It is high time for the OCM (Office of Cannabis Management) to reassess the December queue and ensure that equity is not just an ideal, but a tangible reality for all who have persevered through hardship.</p> <p>We want to forge a cannabis industry that reflects justice, fairness, and inclusivity for all. The moment for transformative change is now.</p> <p>I am part of the social equity applicants for a provisional micro dispensary license. We've been waiting patiently as we have watched license after license get distributed to only a handful of social equity applicants, in stark contrast to the outrageous number of MSOs (Multi-State Operators) and subcontracted licensees who are claiming their fair share of the market.</p> <p>For many of us, this industry is all we know, and we would like to pursue a future in the cannabis sector, doing what we've been doing since we were teenagers, despite paying the price for it. Now that it is legal, we deserve to be heard and reviewed, especially since this initiative was originally proposed as a means to give back to those whose families were impacted by unjustified stops and harassment by law enforcement.</p> <p>I spent multiple years incarcerated—eight years, to be exact—in the New York State justice system, facing both cannabis-related arrests. I believe my peers and I deserve to be heard, to say the least. Many of us are victims of similar circumstances, and our families have paid a heavy price as well, traveling miles and sometimes days just to catch a glimpse of their child or loved one momentarily.</p> <p>As you may or may not be aware, the New York prison system does not offer the most reputable transitional services available. For those who are unaware, these services are designed to help ex-cons reintegrate into society and live a socially acceptable lifestyle according to the government. However, the system doesn't provide wages sufficient to cover basic living expenses in prison, such as toiletries, food, and underclothes, while also allowing for</p>
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				<p>savings to facilitate a transition back into society. This often leads to recidivism.</p> <p>I'm trying to remain hopeful, but from what I see, this has been a money and power grab from the very beginning—especially with allowing MSOs to enter a space for which it wasn't originally designed. We hope you will consider reviewing our applications, but either way, we will not stop fighting for what's right.</p>
65.	Courtney	Rajwani		<p>I understand that there is an application for a cannabis dispensary under consideration for Stellar Cannabis Dispensary at 81-02 37th Avenue, Jackson Heights, NY. 11372. My daughter is a 3rd grader at The Renaissance Charter School directly across the street from this storefront. The local Queens library branch is also directly adjacent to The Renaissance Charter School. I am opposed to having this particular location used for a cannabis dispensary. While I am in favor of NY's legal dispensary program and would be supportive of a license for a Jackson Heights location further from schools, this specific location in an area heavily trafficked by children and families is not appropriate for this type of business. Please do not grant a license for a dispensary at this address.</p>
66.	Jason	Ambrosino	Veterans Holdings	<p>Public Comment for April 24, 2025 Cannabis Control Board Meeting          Submitted by Jason Ambrosino, CEO, Veterans Holdings          Subject: Regulatory Stability, Veteran Support, and Market Integrity</p> <p>Members of the Cannabis Control Board,          As a Veteran-led operator managing a vertically integrated cannabis business in New York, I want to express both concern and commitment. The industry is still in a fragile state. Many of us—licensees, farmers, processors, and dispensaries—are building from scratch while navigating shifting regulatory terrain and competing against a still-dominant illicit market.</p> <p>I respectfully urge the Board to focus on three key areas:</p> <p>Regulatory Stability:          Regulatory changes must be phased in with sufficient lead time. We need dependable timelines and streamlined rulemaking—especially for processors and distributors—so we can make informed investments in equipment, compliance, and staffing.</p>



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				<p>Veteran Inclusion &amp; Support:          As a U.S. Army Veteran, I urge OCM to create a formal Veteran Priority Program. Veterans face unique challenges during reintegration and are natural leaders and problem solvers. Our participation isn't charity—it's strategy. We know how to build teams, systems, and trust. Give us clear support pathways.</p> <p>Market Integrity &amp; Enforcement:          Legal operators are playing by the rules. We need the State to meaningfully enforce against gray-market pop-ups, misrepresented hemp products, and shelf pay-to-play dynamics that harm compliant operators and diminish consumer trust.</p> <p>This is our chance to build the most transparent and inclusive cannabis market in the country. We can't get there without equity, enforcement, and a stable rulebook.</p> <p>Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to contribute.</p> <p>Respectfully,          Jason Ambrosino          CEO, Veterans Holdings</p>
67.	Heidi	R.		<p>We need to get serious about allowing only licensed cannabis sellers in our neighborhood (and throughout the city), and in particular when these shops are near schools and present excessive risk of selling to minors. Unregulated cannabis with doses that are unreliable and without assurance that it will not be sold to children is a huge issue.</p>
68.	Helen	O'Reilly		<p>Thank for reading my comment. It has come to my attention that a cannabis store may open in front of the Jackson Heights public library and the Renaissance School.</p> <p>This location is too close to a school to house a licensed cannabis locations. Jackson Heights has to be creative with space. Therefore, schools may share locations with non-school spaces. They are still schools --- and quite large ones. These spaces should count as a "school" when assessing proximity to cannabis stores. I ask that you push back please on any suggestion that a school that is co-located within a non-school space does not count when determining where cannabis stores can open.</p> <p>Please stay strong in your support for efforts to close unlicensed shops and to allow licensed shops to open. Licensed cannabis businesses deserve to</p>



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				<p>thrive, but not right by a school.          Finally - Before any licensed cannabis facility is approved by the Governors's Cannabis Board, I'd like to request that the Community Board obtain copies of all license materials submitted for review and make these available to the community. I understand the review process includes "ownership review, background checks, municipal consideration, location proximity analysis that needs to be checked on each application."  <a href="https://www.cannabisbusinesstimes.com/us-states/new-york/news/15686920/new-york-cannabis-regulators-approve-109-adult-use-licenses">https://www.cannabisbusinesstimes.com/us-states/new-york/news/15686920/new-york-cannabis-regulators-approve-109-adult-use-licenses</a>          The community deserves an opportunity to see the location proximity analysis and all materials.          Thank you for your service.</p>
69.	Brett	McMillen	Perry Johnson Registrars Food Safety, INC	<p>We are one of 3 approved Certification Bodies on the official NY list for issuing GMP certificates. We have submitted emails concerning the approval of one of these entities with no response as of yet:          Apple Leaf LLC Robert Koch. According to New York's own regulations this company is not an accredited Certification Body and we are questioning how they were approved?</p>
70.	Daniel	Karatzas	Self	<p>A legal cannabis dispensary does NOT belong directly across from a school, regardless of whether the school building is solely a school building, or a building with other tenants. From reading the foolish "law," it seems that a school building that has other commercial tenants is exempt from the requirements that a cannabis dispensary not be located nearby. Whatever genius dreamed that up, for whatever reason, makes NO sense in terms of the Renaissance School in Jackson Heights. We already have enough problems on Roosevelt Avenue, just one block away - prostitution, drug dealing, illegal vending, gangs, etc. - why would you want to put these students in greater jeopardy.  <b>PLEASE REJECT THIS APPLICATION. A LEGAL DISPENSARY DOES NOT BELONG DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET FROM A SCHOOL, EVEN IF THE SCHOOL BUILDING HAS OTHER COMMERCIAL TENANTS. BY AGREEING TO THIS YOU ARE PUTTING OUR YOUTH AT RISK. YES, YOU.... HOW DO YOU SLEEP AT NIGHT?</b></p>



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71.	Ras. R	Crossdale	EFW, Inc Local12.	It's plain to see that OCM's approach to equity is a huge task and time consuming. With the added pressure of negative pressure from them that have been approved for license to stop the December que from being approved or even to be reviewed for approval. Please note that we're patient and aware of this issue. Thank you for your individual efforts to increase justice and transparency in this process for them that suffered from the "war on drugs " cannabis unjust targeted war on us "the black " peoples of America.
72.	Nuala	O'Doherty Naranjo	CB3 Member	I have lived in Jackson Heights for over 20 years and I am happy to welcome this new business to the neighborhood. They have picked a busy commercial street which is perfect for a cannabis business. If we prevent business like this we just allow an illegal market to continue.
73.	Sam	Munson		This shop is already breaking the law by including a logo on its display awning: Why is that allowed? It is located right near a school and a library: Why does it not violate the exclusion zone? No one in the community wants this shop here, and if it is not closed down we will protest it and also protest at the homes of our state-legislative and city council representatives.
74.	Mariya	Fabisevich		Please do not permit cannabis shop to be open so close to our schools. There is a charter school called renaissance that is on 82nd and 37th. Children really should not have access to cannabis since it has been linked to detrimental effects on the developing brain. Bringing it to our neighborhood will likely cause increased access by young people, which is not in anyone's best interest.
75.	Chris	Mango		In no way should this be allowed so close to a school. Whichever hole was use should be closed and the board should be ashamed of approving it.
76.	Marie	Bazile	SmokeySpace llc	Goodmorning to members of the board I would like to know when will my application be approved? See app # ocmsee-2023-002943.and app # for adult use retail dispensary #ocmretl-2023-002965. Thank you.
77.	Heather	Vega	Pacha Products NY LLC	Hello, OCM-MICR-24-000204 licensee here. We have brought this to your attention before but we would like to again today. We were approved for both of our facilities under our micro application but then approximately 2 weeks later we were told we could



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				not use our retail location at 44 Wyckoff Ave Brooklyn, NY 11237. We have submitted a petition, contacted the board many times and showed up to meetings. We are looking to get this resolved as there seems to have been a mistake. Thank you.
78.	Sheree	Clement	Local resident	I strongly oppose opening a cannabis shop directly across the street from a K-12 charter school. It's harmful to the students, creates a whole new workload for the school staff. Long range, it puts lives at risk. Please prevent this shop from opening.
79.	Joseph	Lustberg	Mottz Authentic New York Style LLC	<p>I'm writing today not just as a business owner, father, and entrepreneur, but as a member of this NY cannabis community who deeply believes in cannabis progress, equity, and transparency.</p> <p>As many of you may or may not know, my brother Sean Lustberg and I have been working tirelessly for years since 2022 to open Mottz Green Grocer, a NYS CUARD licensed cannabis dispensary in Hampton Bays. Our mission is to create something special that supports local farmers, empowers small businesses, and brings positive economic growth to the area.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we're now facing strong opposition from the Town of Southampton, specifically due to pressure from St. Rosalie's Church, which is being improperly categorized as a "school" under OCM (Office of Cannabis Management) zoning guidelines. This Church property operates mainly as a place of worship, a day care, a drug rehab facility, and a community center. This church has a liquor store across the street, much closer to the classrooms than our dispensary would be. Even if the town is considering this property a school, the measurement should be from the center of the nearest entrance of the school grounds to the center of our dispensary entrance, which is over 500 feet. The Town of Southampton's Chief Building Inspector measured from the property line of the church to the front door of our property, which is 464 feet. We have tried to reach out to the Church and the town, the planning board was ready to approve us, but the Chief Building Inspector is measuring wrong. He was asked to see what the property is zoned as, which is a church, and he took it upon himself to speak with Father at the church, then take his wrong measurements.</p> <p>Let's be clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ We've followed every rule and regulation laid out</li> </ul>



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				<p>by New York State</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Our location is compliant with all OCM distance requirements</li> <li>◆ We've been transparent and collaborative every step of the way with the town</li> </ul> <p>Yet, despite all this, we are now being stalled and challenged, with misinformation and fear driving the narrative. We need the OCM to step in here, as it's tough enough for dispensaries to open on Long Island, and the town is simply being unjust. We will do whatever we have to do in order to get this dispensary open, and we are asking for your help, but have received no response over the passed month from the OCM. At least give us the courtesy of a conversation with a human.</p> <p>This is bigger than just one business and one family's livelihood. We have invested our life savings into this potential business and have been paying rent on the location for 15 months now. This is about how we treat NY legal operators in emerging industries like cannabis. It's about whether we're going to let stigma or special interests stand in the way! We are NOT going to stand for this, and I know hope of you won't either on the cannabis control board!</p> <p>If you believe in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Fair treatment</li> <li>☑ Local economic development</li> <li>☑ A transparent and consistent regulatory process</li> <li>☑ And the promise of cannabis equity in New York</li> </ul> <p>Then I ask you to stand with us.</p> <p>🙏 We need your voices and your support to explain the laws to the South Hampton and back one of your CAURD licensees who has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to get to this point of potential town denial, is stuck in this lease, and has raised money from family and friends to execute on a successful and safe option in Hampton Bays which is the only alternative to non safe and tested weed from Shinnecock dispensaries on the same road as our dispensary.</p>
80.	Steve	Serdula	Triple S Organics LLC	Wasn't BMillz one of the companies with multiple sticker shops in the southern tier ?
81.	Nicola	Chiaravalle	Prime Arrow LLC -	Dear OCM Board Members and OCM Leadership, I hope this message finds you well. My name is Nicola Chiaravalle, and I am the owner of Prime Arrow. I



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Table with 4 columns. Row 1: OCMCULT-2023-000112 | would like to take a moment to express my appreciation for the work you do in overseeing the cultivation licensing process. Your efforts in creating a structured and fair environment for all applicants are truly commendable. As we all know, the timeline for any cultivator applicant who receives a license is not an immediate path to operation. Every serious cultivation application on the December list involves significant groundwork—whether that means building from the ground up or renovating an existing facility. To illustrate this, I would like to outline the extensive timeline that accompanies the approval process. Once an applicant is approved, they must first secure local approvals from their town for site plans or special use permits. This phase alone can take 6-8 months, including the necessary preparation of documentation by civil engineers for town meetings. Following preliminary approval, the applicant will engage in additional town meetings, which can take another 2-3 months. Next, pre-construction steps commence, involving architects, mechanical, plumbing, and structural engineering, which incurs substantial costs of around \$250,000 to \$300,000. This stage requires raising funds—a process that typically takes 2-3 months, unless funds are already available. Pre-construction itself can take an additional 4-5 months due to the coordination of multiple meetings with engineers and vendors. After obtaining stamped approved drawings, estimating costs with subcontractors can take 1-2 months, alongside the fundraising efforts for the build-out, which usually requires a minimum of \$10-13 million for a 1 or 2 tier cultivation facility. The building permit process with the town adds another estimated 2-3 weeks. Once construction begins, the build-out for a 1 or 2 tier operation can take 8-10 months for renovations and 10-12 months for new constructions. After the build-out, obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy from the town can take an additional month. Following this, the first grow cycle lasts about 6-7 months, with testing and packaging processes adding a few more weeks before products can finally be brought to market. In total, we are looking at a timeline of at least 2 to 2.5



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				<p>years before any new cultivator can deliver their product to market, even if they were approved today. As we consider the current landscape, with approximately 825-900 dispensaries projected to open, this could lead to a supply-demand imbalance that we are all eager to avoid.</p> <p>At Prime Arrow, we are committed to ensuring this does not happen. We are currently in the phase of applying for a building permit and are on pause until we are graciously awarded our cultivation license. Financial institutions are awaiting this approval to move forward.</p> <p>We have already secured all necessary approvals from the town of Queensbury, and we are eager to contribute to our community by creating 30-35 full-time jobs. We believe in the potential for economic growth and the positive impact that our operations can have on the local community.</p> <p>I kindly urge you to consider the broader implications of the licensing timeline and the importance of supporting applicants like Prime Arrow. Your assistance in expediting the licensing process can help us fulfill our commitment to the community and ensure a balanced market.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.      Warm regards,      Nicola Chiaravalle      Owner, Prime Arrow      OCMCULT-2023-000112</p>
82.	Neema	Wiggins	Take N Toke	<p>Good afternoon , my name is Neema Wiggins, and I'm here today as the Justice-Involved Individual and founder of Take N Toke, a provisional CAURD licensee. Take N Toke has leased the iconic formerMedmen medical dispensary in midtown Manhattan, at great expense. It is all pre-built as a cannabis store and ready to re-open quickly. We submitted a PCA waiver request nearly three months ago and have confirmed with OCM that we have NO deficiencies, yet for some reason our PCA waiver request was not on the agenda today. Also I have a few last questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. would caurd license also be terminated if a PCA wavier is denied?</li> <li>2. Are we only addressing 2 PCA reviews a month?</li> <li>3. How many errors must I keep accepting by the OCM e.g. [ sending a welcome packet which required me to spend additional money on blue print floor plans</li> </ol>



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				<p>etc then tell me 3 weeks later to disregard that email where I was welcome to start the building process of my retail store]</p> <p>4. I am spending over \$100 k a month for a location which was already licensed 433 5th avenue N.Y. N.Y. Med men location and there license wasn't dissolved from location but two other licenses were granted proximity protection within 900 feet from this location and now I'm dealing with a waiver request as well as emails that say I have deficiencies then when I call with attorneys online with the OCM says that Nini have no deficiencies. So when do I get direct and accurate answers in a timely fashion without saying my application is being reviewed by OCM and CCB? Respectfully I ask these questions and submit my complete Public comments. I want to do something great for the retail market and the cannabis community. I need my application reviewed and approved. Thanks 🙏</p>
83.	Kristine	DeMarco	Greenleaf Cannabis LLC, aka Hell's Kitchen Cannabis Company	<p>Need to transfer 51 % license to an already approved TPI of 49 percent. When will OCM approve this and how do I apply.</p>
84.	Stacey	Gauthier	The Renaissance Charter School	<p>October 8, 2024          Mr. Frank Taylor          Chair          Community Board 3 – Queens          82-11 37th Avenue          Jackson Heights, NY 11372          Dear Chair Taylor,          I am writing on behalf of the school community of 686 Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade students of The Renaissance Charter School in strong opposition to the proposed opening of Best Fala of Three Birds Retail, LLC, a cannabis dispensary to be located at 81-02 37th Avenue, Jackson Heights. This location is right across the avenue from our school building and less than 200 feet away. Many of my students walk right by it on their way to school. My school also houses a District 75 inclusion program for students with special needs. In fact there is also a Catholic School – St. Joan of Arc – down 82nd Street as well. While the law does permit legal cannabis dispensaries, the proposed location is in opposition to</p>



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				<p>the intent of the law exposing minors to marijuana and other cannabis products and giving them easy access since we know that there are many ways that our young people access products meant for adult usage. Our neighborhood has already been struggling with illegal cannabis shops in close proximity to the school. While this shop may be legal, it should not be permitted to open at this location.</p> <p>Our youth are already struggling with a myriad of mental health and social issues many due to post-pandemic effects and many due to the challenges of the world we live in. We do not need to add drug usage to this equation. By placing a dispensary so close to a diner, a fruit store, etc. we are making cannabis use equivalent to buying a sandwich or apple in the minds of many of our young people.. We cannot and should not allow this cultural shift to take place near our students who are still developing socially and emotionally.</p> <p>My community has mobilized previously against an illegal shop near our school. We are prepared to do the same in this case because while a legal shop is certainly better than an illegal one, many of the unintended consequences still will exist for our students should it open.</p> <p>Thank you very much for your consideration.          Sincerely,          Stacey Gauthier          Principal</p>
85.	Roberto	Fatone	One 4 All Securities Incorporated	<p>My name is Roberto Fatone, president of One 4 All Securities, Provisionally approved License number OCMRETL-2023-002220, and I am here today to hopefully get some questions answered for myself and my fellow licensees. Today, I have officially lost my 3rd location and once again must restart the process and search for a 4th. I have had to adjust my plans, work with new investors, and repeat processes with attorneys and other professionals' multiple times over the last 18 months.</p> <p>While I am grateful to be a part of the process, this process has been incredibly difficult for me and many others. There has been no shortage of effort on my end to communicate with the OCM and drive my operation forward. As a result of confusion with the PCA applications and poor OCM communication (for example: unanswered calls, voicemails, and vague emails), becoming an operational store has become</p>



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				<p>nearly impossible. The PCA process was not clear in any way. My team provided 70 pages worth of information to justify my location and was submitted back in January. We only received confirmation of receipt by the OCM at the end of March. I repeatedly called and emailed in the hopes of getting any form of assurance that my location was likely to be approved or rejected but received no such information. Given the date of expiration of my license, this will most likely be my last attempt to activate a store.</p> <p>I cannot afford to go through this process again without proper communication from the OCM. Given my experiences to this point, what confirmation can you provide me that I am not continuing to waste my time and money securing a new location with no certainty of a response or timeline? The people with licenses cannot afford any more confusion. I feel that provisional and CAURD licensees should be treated with more priority by the office, especially when we have committed financially to a location. I have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars and amassed debt just WAITING for a response. I am asking for better OCM communication and answers promptly when asked. I have a great team and a strong background in business, but there is no recipe to become successful without proper guidance. Please work to ensure timely and not automated responses to licensees. Thank you very much for your time and the opportunity to speak.</p> <p>Q. What is the best way to submit a new location?        Q. How can I reset my portal to re-submit my new location?        Q. I attended the CCB Board meeting today 4/24/25. My major concern is communication with the OCM so i do not loose another location. Can the office please provide me with better communication and guidance to ensure I have a chance to operate a store?</p>
86.	Daniel	Ojedis	Str8 Gas NYC LLC	<p>I want to take a moment to recognize Elisha Vazquez, the CEO of Str8 Gas NYC LLC, whose story exemplifies why social equity in the cannabis industry is so vital.</p> <p>Elisha spent eight years in the New York State prison system on cannabis-related charges. His journey—and the experiences of many others like him—are the very reason social equity programs were designed: to give priority to those who were criminalized and marginalized by outdated laws.</p>



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				<p>It's been frustrating and disheartening to see license after license awarded to large corporations, while individuals like Elisha continue to be overlooked. For many of us, cannabis is more than just a business; it's woven into our history, our struggles, and our future. We've been part of this culture long before it was legalized, and many of us have paid dearly for it—just like Elisha.</p> <p>We call on decision-makers to take a closer look at the December queue and truly consider the legacy operators who have lived this reality. It's time for us to be given the fair opportunity we've earned. The OCM needs to step up and make it right.</p>
87.	Jordan	Hare		<p>I am a resident of Jackson Heights, where my wife and I are raising three children. I strongly object to the opening of a cannabis dispensary at the corner of 37th Ave. and 81st St. just across the street from the renaissance charter school. Our community's children - at that school, at the Catholic school up the block, and beyond - will not benefit in any way from the siting of a dispensary in this location. Furthermore, there are many other dispensaries located throughout Western Queens. Please do not grant a license to this applicant for a cannabis dispensary in this location.</p>
88.	Bill	Bruno		<p>I am a Jackson Heights resident and a member of Queens Community Board 3, but I am speaking entirely on my own behalf. Although the Board recommended disapproval in October. I voted to approve and I'd approve here. Anyone who thinks that having this 2-3 blocks farther away from the school is going to be the thing that keeps minors from buying weed there is gravely in error. Ultimately, it's going to be the professionalism with which a legal cannabis place is run. As I recall, the applicants here have a good track record in Colorado, which leads me to believe they'll have one here.</p>
89.	Tiber	Tomshaw		<p>Hi I'm writing this as a voice for Elisha Vazquez. We have been acquainted many years before and after his 8 year stint in prison because of now defunct and archaic marijuana laws. I believe he has been overlooked as someone who should receive a license. I urge the powers that be to push this topic thru for Elisha and anyone else that has been unfairly persecuted due to a law about a plant.....</p>
90.	Jaclynn	Pehota	FRMIDA LLC d/b/a Zuuld	<p>New York's adult-use cannabis rollout was supposed to deliver something rare: a legal, regulated market</p>



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				<p>We've watched license after license bypass people like Elisha, while MSOs and subcontracted entities claim their share of the market. It's disheartening and unfair. For many of us, cannabis is more than a business. It's our history, our hustle, and our future. We've lived this life long before it became legal, and many of us paid the price for it like Elisha. We urge decision makers to truly consider legacy operators the fair opportunity we deserve. It's time for the OCM to review the December que.</p>
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