

Representative Dean Westlake

Alaska State Legislature | District 40

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and Tourism, Chair
· Resources Committee, Vice Chair
· Community and Regional Affairs Committee
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Barrow · Nuiqsut · Kaktovik · Wainwright · Point Hope · Point Lay · Anaktuvuk Pass · Atkasuk · Prudhoe Bay
Alakaket · Alatna · Bettles · Deering · Evansville · Coldfoot · Hughes · Wiseman

Sara Chambers, Acting Director
Alaska Marijuana Control Board Members
State Office Building, 9th floor
333 Willoughby Ave
Juneau, AK 99801

March 7, 2017

Subject: Regulation regarding buffer zone

Alaska Marijuana Control Board:

I am formally requesting that the Marijuana Control Board place a local variance option on the agenda of your upcoming April board meeting as it would pertain to the 500ft buffer zone for marijuana licensed establishments.

I would like the board to consider amending 3 AAC 306.010 to allow for an appeals process for smaller communities to be able to apply for an exception in the event that the 500' buffer zone cannot be met.

Regulation 3 AAC 306.010. License restrictions- does not accommodate for the realities of communities within my region. For example, technically according to the 2010 US Census, the city of Kotzebue has 27 square miles of land. However, the practical reality is that development, habitation, and commerce are all within less than a few square miles.

Within these few square miles, there are at least 4 schools (elementary, middle, high school, tribal school); 9 churches (7 have their own buildings: Episcopal, Catholic, 1st Baptist, 2nd Baptist, Friends, Mormon, Assembly of God; 2 are in other spaces: 7th Day Adventist in the multi-purpose room located in Episcopal Church, non-denominational 'Workers in the Harvest' out of someone's home); 2 recreation or youth centers (family entertainment center is right next door to the youth center); 2 stand-alone playgrounds and 3 school playgrounds (middle, elementary, and tribal schools); 2 softball fields (second one was just completed last summer), and 1 correctional facility (Kotzebue jail).

All of the entities are evenly distributed throughout the city. It is doubtful that any realistic location would fit outside of the 500' buffer zone parameters.

As you well know, there are many communities spread throughout Alaska that are even smaller than Kotzebue. A local variance option would go a long way of meeting the voters' intent when they voted in the affirmative for the initiative to legalize recreational and commercial marijuana sales.

Thank you for considering my request for a spot on the agenda. I respectfully ask for a response in the coming week.

Sincerely,



Dean Westlake
Representative
House District 40