



State of New Jersey
CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION

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Lt. Governor

DIANNA HOUEYOU, *Chair*
KRISTA NASH, *Vice Chair*
AMELIA MAPP, *Commissioner*
CHRIS RIGGS, *Acting Executive*
Director

NEW JERSEY
CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION

Date: Wednesday, October 1, 2025

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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3 DIANNA HOUEYOU, Chair

4 KRISTA G. NASH, Vice Chair

5 AMELIA MAPP

6 DANIEL SAID, Secretary

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9 ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP PRESENT:

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11 CHRISTOPHER RIGGS, Executive Director

12 DAVE TUASON, Chief Counsel

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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3 ROLL CALL:

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5 MEMBERS PRESENT:

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7 DIANNA HOUENOU, Chair

8 KRISTA G. NASH, Vice Chair

9 AMELIA MAPP, Commissioner

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1 CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I believe
2 we are ready to rock and roll. Welcome to the -- this
3 regular board meeting of the New Jersey Cannabis
4 Regulatory Commission. The time is 11:03 by my watch,
5 and I call this meeting to order. Mr. Said, can you
6 please read the notice of the public meeting?

7 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman, this is a
8 rescheduling of a regularly scheduled meeting of the
9 New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission's 2025 annual
10 meeting schedule. Adequate notice of this meeting has
11 been provided in accordance with the Senator Byron M.
12 Baer Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of the
13 rescheduled meeting was provided to the Asbury Park
14 Press, Bergen record, Courier post, Star Ledger and the
15 Trenton Times on September 24th, 2025.

16 The agenda and information regarding the
17 virtual -- the virtual nature of the meeting and the
18 ability to live stream was also posted on the CRC
19 website. The meeting time and location has also been
20 posted on the website of the New Jersey Cannabis
21 Regulatory Commission and with the office of the
22 Secretary of the State.

23 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said, can you
24 please take roll call.

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

1 COMMISSIONER AMELIA MAPP: Present.

2 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

3 VICE CHAIR: Present.

4 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou.

5 CHAIR: Present.

6 THE SECRETARY: We now have a quorum. The
7 first order of business is for the commission to go
8 into executive session to discuss legal matters and
9 litigation and investigation updates. These are
10 discussions that are not shared with the public. We
11 believe the executive session should take about one
12 hour and 30 minutes.

13 CHAIR: Thank you. Is there a motion to
14 go into executive session?

15 COMM. MAPP: So moved.

16 VICE CHAIR: Second.

17 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Mapp,
18 seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is there any discussion
19 on this motion to go into executive session? Hearing
20 no discussion, all those in favor say aye?

21 COMM. MAPP: Aye.

22 VICE CHAIR: Aye.

23 CHAIR: Aye. All those opposed say nay.
24 Any extensions? Motion passes.

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1 Executive session

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3 CHAIR: So as Mr. Said mentioned, we
4 expect the executive session to last approximately 90
5 minutes. We will leave the live stream running during
6 that time so we can expect to resume the public session
7 of this meeting at about 12:35. Thank you for your
8 patience, everyone.

9

10 Public Session

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12 CHAIR: All right. Welcome back everyone.
13 Thank you for your patience. Our executive session has
14 ended, so we will now resume the public portion of this
15 meeting. Time is 1:03. Mr. Said, can you please
16 announce the next agenda item?

17 THE SECRETARY: Next up on the agenda is
18 approving the minutes of both the commissions open and
19 executive sessions held on September 10th, 2025. The
20 minutes have been shared with the members of the
21 commission prior to this meeting.

22 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. If there are
23 no edits or changes to the meeting minutes, is there a
24 motion on this matter?

25 COMM. MAPP: I make the motion that the

1 minutes be approved as is.

2 VICE CHAIR: Second.

3 CHAIR: Commissioner Mapp moves to approve
4 the meeting minutes, seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is
5 there any discussion on this motion? Hearing no
6 discussion, all those in favor say aye?

7 COMM. MAPP: Aye.

8 VICE CHAIR: Aye.

9 CHAIR: Aye. All those opposed say nay?
10 Any extensions? Motion passes.

11 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
12 agenda is the chair's report.

13 CHAIR: Thank you. I want to start
14 today's chair's report by highlighting some of the
15 agency's achievements. Some of our board members and
16 staff recently attended conferences in Atlantic City
17 and Washington DC and at each conference, and in fact,
18 at so many canvas conferences held across the country,
19 one thing has been clear, New Jersey is consistently
20 recognized and praised by industry participants,
21 lenders, and even other cannabis regulators as doing
22 terrific work.

23 We've been recognized by advocacy groups
24 and other cannabis regulators for our progressive and
25 inclusive policies. The wealth of information on our

1 website has been routinely called out by conference
2 attendees as an invaluable resource.

3 And our accessibility as an agency has
4 been lauded by business owners who need to contact
5 their assigned compliance officers, by bankers who need
6 to verify whether prospective clients have a valid
7 license and by analysts who call data to develop
8 informative industry outlooks.

9 I want to underscore these
10 acknowledgements because every state that has legalized
11 cannabis for adults has encountered challenges. Chief
12 among them juggling competing goals and managing
13 sometimes unrealistic external expectations, but the
14 proof is in the pudding. New Jersey is a national
15 leader, and other states have noticed.

16 Nevertheless, detractors have continued to
17 push false or misleading narratives about the work of
18 the commission. For more than a year, these detractors
19 have taken aim against this board specifically for its
20 diligent action, trying to pressure the agency away
21 from doing what is in the best interest of the industry
22 and from enforcing the law.

23 Now, as a government body, we are of
24 course no stranger to being the subject of criticism.
25 Legitimate criticism is -- or an expression of

1 dissatisfaction. They do not offend us. Rather, they
2 help us to faith -- to faithfully impartially perform
3 our duties and make the industry better for business
4 owners, patients and consumers.

5 But to belie and undermine the tremendous
6 work that has happened under the Murphy administration
7 is a far cry from a legitimate discourse that offers
8 solutions to give meaningful opportunities for not just
9 some, but all aspiring business owners to thrive.

10 We've been criticized for holding to the
11 guardrails that protect new entrepreneurs, but those
12 protections have resulted in a market that is being
13 lauded for being diverse along racial, cultural, and
14 socioeconomic lines. We continue to hear complaints
15 about the financial burdens of processing times yet
16 much of the -- the timeline for application processing
17 lies outside of the commission's purview.

18 There are required FBI background checks
19 and state law requires people to get municipal approval
20 and pay for property leases or purchases all before
21 even submitting an application to the commission. All
22 these things take time and money, and only the
23 legislature can reduce those burdens that are written
24 into statute, but what our agency can do and does is
25 educate applicants about what does and doesn't require

1 spending before an application is approved.

2 We also collaborated with sister agencies
3 at the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and
4 the New Jersey Business Action Center to stand up, not
5 one, but two state sponsored assistance programs that
6 garnered national praise. Meanwhile, there are other
7 agencies and branches of government -- of state
8 government that have the power to lower some of those
9 barriers that continue to impede entrepreneurs,
10 patients, and consumers.

11 Namely, high prices, lack of capital,
12 complicated municipal approval processes and access to
13 business spaces. But sadly, many have chosen to throw
14 barbs and stones rather than take action to make the
15 industry accessible and beneficial for everyone. I'm
16 confident that were it not for the people who presently
17 sit on this board and those who sat on the board before
18 now, as well as our senior staff led by director Chris
19 Riggs, this industry would be the opaque, monopolistic
20 spectacle that people feared would take shape.

21 So I wanna thank my fellow commissioners
22 both past and present, our staff that work hard day in
23 and day out, the New Jersey EDA, the NJBAC, and
24 Governor Murphy for their hard work and commitment to
25 the efforts that led us to being the model that we are.

1 The New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission remains
2 committed to the values of equity and safety and
3 serving with the integrity and transparency that New
4 Jerseyans deserve.

5 Finally, I want to move on and remind
6 everyone of the new online form that can be used to
7 submit regulatory waiver requests. We are still seeing
8 some people submit their waiver requests by e-mail or
9 by letter. So I want to take this time to remind folk
10 that we created this form to standardize the waiver
11 request process and ensure that requesters are thinking
12 through the necessary components for their request.

13 So the form can be found on our website.
14 You go to the information hub tab and click on cannabis
15 statutes and rules, and then you scroll down to the
16 adult use recreational cannabis section. Remember that
17 a request to waive a regulation must meet three
18 criteria; must be consistent with the medicinal or
19 recreational cannabis laws, must be necessary in order
20 to provide access to cannabis, and it must not
21 jeopardize anyone's health, safety, or welfare.

22 And anyone who submits their a request to
23 waive a regulation, will get a response in writing.
24 The decision will be made on your request at a public
25 board meeting unless you withdraw your request. And

1 our team has done a great job in making sure that our
2 turnaround times for these waiver requests continues to
3 -- to decrease.

4 So thank you to everyone at -- on our
5 legal team and with the Office of Compliance and
6 Investigations for your help in making sure that we're
7 getting back to these businesses with answers on their
8 requests. That concludes today's chair's report.
9 Thank you.

10 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
11 agenda is the Executive Director's Report.

12 CHAIR: Director Riggs. The floor is
13 yours.

14 DIRECTOR CHRISTOPHER RIGGS: Thank you,
15 Madam Chair. So I don't have a large executive
16 director's report. We will be presenting our quarterly
17 data to the board in a future meeting, hopefully by
18 December, but I will have a brief report here. Updates
19 on dispensary opening, so more than 260 medicinal and
20 recreational dispensaries are open in all of the 21
21 counties. We've got a list of the new dispensaries up
22 there.

23 Got some more opening up in the
24 northeastern part of the state and one medical only
25 dispensary has opened recently, Illicit Gardens in

1 Secaucus. Licensing update, total license is approved
2 as of September 18th of 2025. A little over 3000
3 applications have been submitted in our licensing
4 portal -- portal. 2,388 of those applications have
5 been approved.

6 276 are pending review in the Office of
7 Licensing, looking for completeness review and checking
8 their documents. 243 applications are pending
9 resubmission following a cure letter. We found an
10 issue on the staff side of things with the application,
11 sent them a cure letter, and we're waiting for a
12 response. 164 applications are with our Office of
13 Compliance and Investigations doing more of a deep dive
14 into the application and the individuals that are part
15 of that application.

16 The licensing update for total adult use
17 for recreational licenses that have been approved as of
18 September 18th of 2025, 1,638 conditional licenses have
19 been approved. 459 conditional-to-annual conversions.
20 291 annual licenses. We have 84 expanded alternative
21 treatment centers. The total operating licenses and
22 permits in the state is up to 361.

23 Applications that are up for consideration
24 today that we are recommending to the board are four
25 conditional-to-annual conversions, seven annual

1 licenses, and I believe the renewals we are
2 recommending, 62 renewals today. Current patient
3 enrollment numbers as of September 15th of 2025, total
4 patients are still going down. It's at 55,513.
5 Caregivers remain steady 3,738 and same with doctors.

6 A little over 1,500 doctors that are
7 currently enrolled in the medical cannabis program.
8 And with that madam chair, that'll end my executive
9 director's report and I kick it over back to you.

10 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. And
11 are there any questions from the board for Director
12 Riggs? Hearing none, then we will move forward.

13 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
14 agenda is consideration of committee reports.

15 CHAIR: Thank you. And we -- we will hear
16 from just one committee that has a report, the
17 Permitting and Licensing Committee, so I'll turn it
18 over to Vice Chair Nash.

19 VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Chairwoman. And
20 good afternoon, everyone. The Permitting and Licensing
21 Committee receives and reviews extension requests from
22 conditional license holders who need more time to
23 convert to an annual license. We have -- we have
24 approved 28 extensions from August through September,
25 and total for this year has been 119 conditional --

1 conditional license extensions.

2 I wanted to point out that the extension
3 requests can be found if you can go back one slide
4 again, please. If you look at the bottom of this
5 slide, you will see that they can be found under the
6 tab license -- businesses -- license applications. And
7 if you look to the right, the form can be found under
8 application extension requests.

9 I do want to note that if someone does
10 want to submit an extension request, it must be
11 submitted 15 -- at least 15 days before license
12 expiration. Next slide, please. And (inaudible) here.
13 So the top reasons for extension requests, municipal
14 approval delays is 86%. Lack of or delay with site
15 control and then funding. The top municipalities in
16 which licenses are awaiting town decisions are Atlantic
17 City, Newark, and Paterson.

18 So again, if you are experiencing any
19 delays and you need some more time, please fill out the
20 -- the extension request at least 15 days before your
21 license expiration, and the committee will consider
22 that. Also, if you are on an agenda, if there's a
23 municipal issue, you're on the agenda, if you -- you
24 can demonstrate that you have submitted an application,
25 it would be helpful if you could submit with your

1 extension request as much information to help the
2 committee make a -- an informed decision.

3 And that is all I have, madam chair, I
4 seat the floor back to you.

5 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Vice Chair
6 Nash. Are there any questions for Vice Chair regarding
7 the committee report? Hearing none, then we'll move
8 forward.

9 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
10 agenda is consideration of public notices and
11 publications.

12 CHAIR: Here, we'll turn the floor over to
13 Director Riggs to provide an overview and
14 recommendation on the -- on board action regarding the
15 social equity excise fee.

16 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. For
17 the social equity excise fee, the statute requires us
18 to calculate the average price of usable cannabis for
19 the calendar year to be used.

20 In -- in determining that number, staff
21 needs additional time to -- to adequately calculate
22 that number and therefore it's recommending that we
23 waive the regulation and extend the time period
24 removing the November 1st requirement for filing in the
25 registrar the social equity fee notice. So the

1 recommendation is to waive a rule requiring that
2 November 1st deadline. Thank you.

3 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
4 there any questions for Director Riggs? And I believe
5 the precise rule that he's referring to is NJAC 17:30-
6 3.4(d) for that -- that November 1st deadline. So if
7 there -- there are no questions for Director Riggs, is
8 there a motion on this matter regarding the waiver of
9 the rule?

10 I will move to issue a waiver of NJAC
11 17:30-3.4(d) so that we -- so that staff have the time
12 necessary to make calculations according to south
13 methodologies for our -- before we adjust the social
14 equity excise fee at a later date.

15 VICE CHAIR: I second that.

16 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is
17 there any discussion on this motion to waive the rule?
18 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
19 the vote?

20 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

21 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

22 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

23 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

24 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

25 CHAIR: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
2 next item for consideration are applications for
3 business conversions.

4 CHAIR: Director Riggs, the floor is
5 yours.

6 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
7 These are micro business to standard business
8 conversions. We have four of them that we are
9 recommending to the board today. They're up here on
10 the screen. Doobiez LLC, Golden Door Dispensary LLC,
11 Jersey Meds Management LLC, and the Happy Farmer LLC.
12 These applications were submitted in the portal and
13 reviewed by our licensing team and the Office of
14 Compliance and Investigations.

15 They've been deemed complete. Renovation
16 or relocation plans have been reviewed. We've looked
17 at the business -- business activity over the last 180
18 days. Site plans have been reviewed, business -- new
19 business plans, and each of these entities is also
20 submitted an LPA. Therefore, we are recommending that
21 these individual applicants have satisfied the
22 regulatory requirements and we are recommending that
23 all four of these micro business to standard business
24 conversion to be approved. Thank you.

25 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Any

1 questions from the board? Hearing no questions from
2 the board, is there a motion on this matter?

3 VICE CHAIR: (Inaudible).

4 COMM. MAPP: Go ahead.

5 VICE CHAIR: I move to approve the convert
6 -- business conversion applications.

7 COMM. MAPP: I second.

8 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Nash, seconded
9 by Commissioner Mapp. Is there any discussion on this
10 motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
11 please call the vote?

12 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

13 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

15 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

17 CHAIR: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
19 next item up for consideration are location change
20 applications.

21 CHAIR: Director Riggs, the floor is yours
22 to describe -- to provide a summary of the location
23 change application received.

24 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. We
25 have one location change. Got Your Six dispensary LLC

1 in Princeton. It's -- it's gonna remain at the same
2 address, but move over to a different unit within that
3 complex. We reviewed the application, OCI is satisfied
4 with the application that it meets the regulatory
5 criteria.

6 They confirmed that the new -- the new
7 location will satisfy the regulations and we will be
8 out there doing an inspection as soon as they are moved
9 into that new location. Therefore, we are recommending
10 approval at this time. Thank you.

11 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
12 there any questions from the board regarding this
13 location change application? Hearing no questions, is
14 there a motion on this matter? Commissioner Mapp, your
15 microphone is --

16 COMM. MAPP: (Inaudible) Madam Chair, I
17 make the motion that the application is presented -- is
18 approved as presented.

19 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Mapp. Is
20 there a second?

21 VICE CHAIR: Second.

22 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Any
23 discussion on this motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
24 Said, can you please call the vote?

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

1 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

3 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

5 CHAIR: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
7 next item on the agenda, we have consideration of an
8 application for canopy change.

9 CHAIR: Thank you. Director Riggs, the
10 floor is yours.

11 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. This
12 is a modification of the business's capacity or
13 physical plan, and it is a canopy increase for the
14 AGJRA, an adult use class one cannabis cultivator
15 requesting to increase their canopy to -- from a Tier 1
16 to a Tier 4, I believe or Tier 6 -- Tier 6 -- Tier 6
17 canopy greater than a 100,000 square feet, but not to
18 exceed 150,000 square feet.

19 The application has been reviewed. Site
20 plans, standard operating procedures, all of those
21 things were reviewed and deemed satisfactory under the
22 regulations by the Office of Compliance and
23 Investigation. And inspection will be held once they
24 are billed out and we can inspect the canopy and make
25 sure that we have camera access to the canopy.

1 Therefore, we are recommending that this application to
2 increase the canopy be approved. Thank you.

3 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. It's
4 quite a jump from tier -- Tier 1 to Tier 6, but I -- I
5 hope they can do it. Are there any -questions from the
6 board on this matter? Hearing no questions, is there a
7 motion?

8 COMM. MAPP: (Inaudible) I make the motion
9 that we approve the application for AGJRA from Tier 1
10 to Tier 6.

11 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Mapp. Is
12 there a second?

13 VICE CHAIR: Second.

14 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Any
15 discussion on this motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
16 Said, can you please call the vote?

17 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

18 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

19 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

20 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

22 CHAIR: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
24 next item up for consideration are ownership change
25 applications.

1 CHAIR: Director Riggs, floor is yours.

2 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. We
3 have several ownership application changes. We'll go
4 through them here. Earth & Ivy LLC is trying to change
5 their ownership structure. ElevenEleven is adding some
6 new owners. Garden Greens is adding a new owner.
7 Lefty D'Lite LLC is adding new owners. Shipwreck'd
8 LLC is adding new owners and Theory Wellness of New
9 Jersey is changing their ownership structure.

10 Each of these entities has satisfied the
11 regulatory requirements for an ownership change. The
12 owners and the individuals that were required to be
13 vetted under the regulations were vetted by the Office
14 of Compliance and Investigation, and they were deemed
15 qualified to enter into this adult use market.
16 Therefore, we are recommending that all of these
17 ownership changes be approved by the board today.
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
20 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
21 questions, is there a motion on this matter?

22 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chair, I move to
23 approve the ownership changes for the businesses
24 presented here today.

25 COMM. MAPP: I second.

1 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair and seconded
2 by Commissioner Mapp. Any discussion on this motion?
3 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
4 the vote?

5 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

6 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

8 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

10 CHAIR: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
12 next item up for consideration are the adult use
13 cannabis business conversion license applications.

14 CHAIR: Okay. Director Riggs, I'll turn
15 the floor over to you.

16 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Each
17 of these conversion applications had a conditional
18 license, obviously, and they're converting that
19 conditional license into an annual license. They
20 followed our licensing process in the regulations that
21 spelled out in the regulations where priority
22 assignment was confirmed.

23 Priority was thereby verified by our
24 licensing team where we confirmed that the appropriate
25 documentation that was submitted to support the

1 identified priority was actually provided. Cures were
2 sent out if we need to. A completeness review is
3 conducted by our licensing team where they confirm that
4 not only are like the required documents submitted, but
5 that those documents are actually filled out and all
6 the required information is filled out on those
7 documents.

8 These -- these applications are then
9 scored. Documents are reviewed to ensure that the
10 applicant submitted all the necessary requirements
11 under the regulations and that the application is
12 acceptable. There is then a qualification review
13 conducted by our -- on the individuals, financial
14 sources, management services agreements by our Office
15 of Compliance and Investigations.

16 Background checks are conducted if needed
17 on the individual. And then we have a quality control
18 process where we ensure that each of these steps was
19 satisfied and that all the documents satisfy the
20 requirements. All -- both of these applications meet
21 those requirements and therefore we are recommending
22 that they be approved today. Thank you.

23 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
24 there any questions from the board? Hearing No
25 questions, is there a motion on this matter?

1 COMM. MAPP: Madam Chair, I make the
2 motion that we approve these two conditional annual
3 licenses conversions as presented.

4 VICE CHAIR: And I second.

5 CHAIR: Is there any discussion on this
6 motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
7 please call the vote?

8 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

9 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

11 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

13 CHAIR: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
15 next item up for consideration is a cannabis business
16 conversion license application for a higher ground
17 dispensary.

18 VICE CHAIR: Madam chair, I move to adopt
19 a -- a resolution invoking the doctrine of necessity in
20 the matter of application 12049, a higher ground
21 dispensary. And I'll explain by reading parts of this
22 resolution.

23 Whereas pursuant to NJSA 24:6I-27, the New
24 Jersey conflicts of interest law NJ COIL, applies to
25 all employees and members of the commission with

1 limited exceptions. And whereas in accordance with NJ
2 COIL, one or more commission members is ineligible from
3 considering any matter pertaining to application 12049,
4 an application from a higher ground dispensary.

5 Whereas Chairwoman Houenou has recused
6 herself from all matters involving a higher ground
7 dispensary due to a personal relationship. This
8 recusal was filed with the State Ethics Commission.
9 Due to the recusal, the commission lacks a sufficient
10 number of members necessary to take a valid vote on
11 this application.

12 Regarding applications for an annual
13 license, the commission shall verify the information
14 contained in the application, review the qualifications
15 for the applicable license class, set forth in the
16 statute and the regulations and not more than 90 days
17 after receipt of an application make a determination.

18 The statute also directs the commission
19 shall approve a license application that meets the
20 requirements unless the commission finds by clear and
21 convincing evidence that the applicant would be
22 manifestly unsuitable to perform the activities for the
23 license class for which license -- licensure is sought.

24 Now therefore be it resolved, the
25 commission finds the following, the -- the commission

1 does not need more time to adequately review
2 application 12049. There is a pressing need for
3 action, that is action on application 12049 is required
4 by law and the matter cannot be laid aside until
5 another date because the commission does not need more
6 time to review the application. And the commission is
7 unable to act without the members in conflict taking
8 part.

9 Be it further resolved that as a last
10 resort, the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission
11 hereby invokes the doctrine of necessity so that those
12 who are ineligible to consider this matter can
13 participate in taking required action on application
14 12049 on October 1st, 2025. If approved, this
15 resolution -- resolution would take effect immediately.
16 Do I have a motion to approve the rule of necessity?

17 COMM. MAPP: Yes, you do.

18 VICE CHAIR: All right. Is that a second?
19 I'm motioning. Is there a second?

20 COMM. MAPP: I second, I second.

21 VICE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you.

22 COMM. MAPP: I'm sorry.

23 VICE CHAIR: Any discussion?

24 COMM. MAPP: No.

25 VICE CHAIR: Mr. Said, can you please call

1 the vote

2 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

3 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

5 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

7 CHAIR: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

9 VICE CHAIR: I will turn the floor to
10 Executive Director Riggs to share a summary of higher
11 ground application.

12 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Vice Chair Nash.
13 This license follow the similar process that I just
14 articulated for the two conditional conversion to
15 annual licenses. Priority assignment, priority
16 verification, completeness review. The application is
17 then scored, and then we have a qualification review,
18 quality control. This application has satisfied all
19 the regulations, has been deemed complete and therefore
20 we are recommending that the higher ground be approved
21 at this time. Thank you.

22 VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs.
23 Are there any questions for the board regarding this
24 application? Hearing no questions, is there a motion
25 on this matter?

1 COMM. MAPP: So moved.

2 VICE CHAIR: I'll second. Any discussion?

3 Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

4 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

5 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

7 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

9 CHAIR: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
11 next item up for consideration is an adult use cannabis
12 business conversion license application for Chelsea
13 Beach Buds by Bridge City Collective.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. So I now
15 will acknowledge that we ordinarily would have a
16 recusal on this application. So I am introducing a
17 motion to adopt the resolution invoking the doctrine of
18 necessity in the matter of application number 2406.
19 And just as Vice Chair Nash did, I will also read into
20 the record portions of the relevant resolution.

21 So the New Jersey Conflict of Interest
22 Laws, NJ COIL, applies to all employees and members of
23 the commission with limited exceptions. And in
24 accordance with NJ COIL, one or more commission members
25 is ineligible from considering any matters pertaining

1 to application number 2426, an application from Chelsea
2 Beach Buds by Bridge City Collective LLC.

3 Vice Chair Nash has recused herself from
4 all matters involving Chelsea Beach Buds by Bridge City
5 Collective LLC due to a personal relationship. And
6 this recusal was filed with the State Ethics
7 Commissions in accordance with standard protocols.

8 Due to the recusal, the commission lacks a
9 sufficient number of members necessary to take a valid
10 vote on application number 2426. And state law
11 requires that regarding applications for an annual
12 license, the commission verify the information
13 contained in the application and review the
14 qualifications for the applicable license class set
15 forth in statute and regulations.

16 And not more than 90 days after the
17 receipt of the application, make a final determination
18 as to whether the application is approved or denied, or
19 that the commission requires more time to adequately
20 review the application.

21 State law also directs that the commission
22 shall approve a license application that meets the
23 requirements unless the commission finds by clear and
24 convincing evidence that the application -- sorry, that
25 the applicant would be manifestly unsuitable to perform

1 the activities for the applicable license class for
2 which licensure is sought.

3 So now, be it resolved that the New Jersey
4 Cannabis Regulatory Commission finds the following.
5 Number 1, the commission does not need more time to
6 adequately review application number 2426. Number 2,
7 there is a pressing need for action, that is action on
8 application number 2426 is required by law and the
9 matter cannot be laid aside until another date because
10 the commission does not need more time to review the
11 application.

12 And number 3, the commission is unable to
13 act without the members in conflict taking part. Be it
14 further resolved that as a last resort, the Cannabis
15 Regulatory Commission hereby invokes adoption of
16 necessity so that those who were ineligible to consider
17 this matter can participate in taking required action
18 on the matter of application number 2426 today, on
19 October 1st, 2025, and if approved, this resolution
20 would take effect immediately. So this is the
21 resolution that I would introduce. And so is there a
22 second?

23 COMM. MAPP: I second.

24 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Mapp. Is
25 there any discussion on this motion to approve the --

1 to adopt the resolution invoking the doctrine of
2 necessity? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
3 please call the vote?

4 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

5 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

7 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

9 CHAIR: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

11 CHAIR: So now we turn --

12 THE SECRETARY: Go ahead, sorry.

13 CHAIR: So we'll now turn the floor to the
14 substantive underlying application of application
15 Number 2426. I'll turn the floor over to Director
16 Riggs to provide a summary of the application that was
17 received from Chelsea Beach -- Beach Buds by Bridge
18 City Collective LLC. Director Riggs?

19 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

20 Application 2426, Chelsea Beach Buds by Bridge City
21 Collective LLC, a retailer, has gone through the same
22 process, that the additional consider -- conditional
23 annual conversion licensees and applicants have gone
24 through. Priority assignment was there, priority
25 verification, completeness review, the application was

1 scored. We are satisfied with the qualification review
2 and therefore we are recommending that this application
3 be approved. Thank you.

4 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
5 there any questions for Director Riggs regarding this -
6 - this application? Hearing no questions, is there a
7 motion on this matter?

8 COMM. MAPP: Make the motion that we
9 approve the application.

10 VICE CHAIR: Second.

11 CHAIR: Seconded by -- moved by
12 Commissioner Mapp, and seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is
13 there any discussion on this motion? Hearing no
14 discussion on this motion to approve application number
15 2426, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

16 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

17 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

19 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

21 CHAIR: Yes.

22 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. Now
23 the next item for -- up for consideration are the adult
24 use cannabis business annual license applications.

25 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. We were just

1 in a hurry to get to it. That's all. I appreciate the
2 -- the eagerness. We're all excited to see these
3 applications moving forward. Director Riggs, floor is
4 yours to describe the applications that applied
5 directly for an annual license. Director Riggs, your
6 microphone is muted.

7 DIR. RIGGS: You missed all the good
8 things that I just said, so I'll restart. These
9 applications, there's six annual license applications
10 up for considerations today. One cultivator, one
11 manufacturer, four retailers. These licenses that are
12 up for consideration are -- followed our licensing
13 process where there was a priority assignment that was
14 determined, that priority was then verified.

15 A completeness review was conducted by our
16 Office of Licensing and confirming that all the
17 required documents were submitted and all the required
18 information was in fact filled out on those documents.
19 The applications were then scored. Our Office of
20 Compliance and Investigations conducted a qualification
21 review of the individuals that were required under law
22 regulation to be conducted under a background check to
23 ensure that they could enter into the adult use market.

24 Quality control was done by our office of
25 licensing compliance and legal. And at this time, we

1 are recommending that these annual license applications
2 be approved by the board today. Thank you.

3 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
4 there any questions from the board for Director Riggs?
5 Hearing no questions, is there a motion on this matter?

6 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chair, I move to
7 approve the annual license applications for those
8 presented here today.

9 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Nash. Is
10 there a second?

11 COMM. MAPP: I second.

12 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Mapp. Is
13 there any discussion on this motion? I just want to
14 note for our businesses that some of our annual license
15 applications are from those that are seeking to invoke
16 a relatively new statute and I appreciate those
17 applicant's patience and collaboration with us to make
18 sure that the provisions of the law are complied with
19 and I'm happy to support the applications today.

20 Just wanna make sure that I underscore the
21 -- the need for -- for everyone to, you know, take your
22 time, make sure that the -- your application does
23 comply with the -- the law and our regulations and, but
24 I'm happy to support the -- the applications here
25 today. Any additional discussion? Hearing no further

1 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

2 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

3 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

5 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

7 CHAIR: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
9 next item up for consideration is the adult use
10 cannabis business annual license application for Mr.
11 Jones LLC.

12 CHAIR: So as we did before, we do have a
13 commissioner who ordinarily is recused on this matter.
14 However, I am moving that to adopt a resolution
15 invoking the doctrine of necessity in the matter of
16 application number 16707 on Mr. Jones LLC. And I will
17 read into the record portions -- the relevant portions
18 of the resolution.

19 The New Jersey Conflict of Interest Law NJ
20 COIL applies to all employees and members of the
21 commission with limited exceptions. And in accordance
22 with NJ COIL, one or more commission members is
23 ineligible from considering any matters pertaining to
24 application number 16707, an application from Mr. Jones
25 LLC.

1 Vice Chair Nash has recused herself from
2 all matters involving Mr. Jones LLC due to a personal
3 relationship. This recusal was filed with the State
4 Ethics Commission in accordance with standard
5 protocols. Due to the recusal, the commission lacks
6 the sufficient number of members necessary to take a
7 valid vote on application number 16707.

8 State law states that regarding
9 applications for an annual license, the commission
10 shall verify the information contained in the
11 application and review the qualifications for the
12 applicable license class set forth in statute and
13 regulations. And not more than 90 days after receipt
14 of an application make a determination as to whether
15 the application is approved or denied, or that the
16 commission requires more time to adequately review the
17 application.

18 State law also directs the commission to
19 approve a license application that meet the
20 requirements of statute and regulations, unless the
21 commission finds by clear and convincing evidence that
22 the applicant would be manifestly unsuitable to perform
23 the activities for the applicable license.

24 Now be it -- now therefore, be it resolved
25 that the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission

1 finds the following. One, the commission does not need
2 more time to adequately review application number
3 16707. Number 2, there is a pressing need for action,
4 that is, action on application number 16707 is required
5 by state law and the matter cannot be laid aside until
6 another date because the commission does not need more
7 time to review the application. And three, the
8 commission is unable to act without the members in
9 conflict taking part.

10 Be it further resolved that as a last
11 resort, the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission
12 hereby invokes the doctrine of necessity so that those
13 who were a -- ineligible to consider this matter can
14 participate in taking required action on the matter of
15 application number 16707 on October 1st, 2025. And if
16 adopted, this resolution would take effect immediately.
17 So those are the relevant portions of the resolution
18 that I'm proposing that we adopt. Is there a second?

19 COMM. MAPP: I second.

20 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Mapp. Is
21 there any discussion on this motion? Hearing no
22 discussion on the motion to adopt the resolution
23 invoking the doctrine of necessity on the matter -- in
24 the matter of application number 16707 for Mr. Jones
25 LLC, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

1 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

2 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

3 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

4 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

6 CHAIR: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

8 CHAIR: I'll now turn the floor over to
9 Director Riggs to provide a summary of the substantive
10 application itself from Mr. Jones LLC. Director Riggs?

11 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. This
12 application was thoroughly vetted through the licensing
13 process. It was -- a priority assignment was given, it
14 was verified. We did a completeness review. We had
15 some cures where we went back and forth on.

16 Qualification review was done, but this application is
17 complete. It's been reviewed, it's been scored, and is
18 now recommended for approval by the board. Thank you.

19 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
20 there any questions from the board or Director Riggs?
21 Hearing no questions, is there a motion?

22 COMM. MAPP: Madam Chair, I make the
23 motion that we approve the application as presented.

24 VICE CHAIR: And I'll second.

25 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Mapp and

1 seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Any discussion on this
2 motion? I'll note -- I want to note that I am
3 supportive of the motion, however because the
4 commission has determined what is needed to satisfy the
5 commercial reasonableness requirements under statute,
6 those requirements should be spelled out in the final
7 agency decision that is issued to this applicant and
8 our legal team.

9 So our chief counsel should confirm the
10 compliance with those commercial reasonableness
11 requirements before a license is issued to the
12 business. So I believe those things should be spelled
13 out in the -- in our resolution and our final agency
14 decision. Is there any further discussion on this
15 matter? Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Said, can
16 you please call the vote?

17 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

18 COMM. MAPP: Before I make a vote, I just
19 want to say that from the time I joined this board, Mr.
20 Jones has been a constant on every agenda. And I just
21 want to say that we as a commission will always attempt
22 to do our due diligence, and therefore these things
23 take time and we want to make sure that the process is
24 properly followed. So we wanna make sure that it's a
25 system -- a manner that -- that is done in a manner

1 that's beneficial to all parties involved. And with
2 that, I vote yes.

3 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

4 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

6 CHAIR: As I cast my vote, I want to echo
7 the sentiments expressed by Commissioner Mapp. I think
8 she said it very well. And so long as the need for
9 compliance with the reasonable -- commercial
10 reasonableness standards are laid out in the FAD and
11 our chief legal -- chief counsel confirms in writing
12 the -- whether there's compliance with the -- the
13 statutory requirements before issuing a license, I am
14 supportive. So I -- with that, my vote is yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
16 next item up for consideration are the adult use
17 cannabis business annual license renewal applications.

18 CHAIR: We have quite a handful of these
19 right now. Director Riggs, I'll turn the floor over to
20 you. Director Riggs, we again, can't hear all the
21 wonderful things that you're saying.

22 DIR. RIGGS: My mute, my -- I can't get
23 off of mute today. We have 62 total renewals. I
24 handled the first 61 first. So there's 61 renewals.
25 All these renewals are submitted in the licensing

1 portal. As a reminder, the licenses are effective for
2 one year from the date of interest -- issuance, and
3 they're required to be reviewed annually.

4 We have updated our certification or form
5 that we use for our renewal process to ensure
6 regulatory compliance and to get additional information
7 that may be required. As a reminder, expanded
8 alternative treatment centers are still required after
9 their first year -- for their first year of renewal,
10 they need to submit documentary evidence demonstrating
11 additional municipal approval and municipal support.
12 That needs to be an additional document that we get
13 from the municipality.

14 All of our other renewals, though, are
15 only required to fill out this certification form and
16 should only submit additional documents upon request.
17 It streamlines the process. It helps us get the
18 renewals process quicker. So please, please, please
19 just follow that process and use that new form that
20 licensing has presented and made available for
21 everybody to use to streamline this process.

22 With that said, all of these entities have
23 required the -- required documentation for renewal.
24 That documentation has been reviewed by licensing in
25 the Office of Compliance and Investigations and we are

1 satisfied with the documentation and that there is
2 regulatory compliance. And therefore, we are
3 recommending approval of these 61 renewals.

4 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
5 there any questions from the board regarding this group
6 of 61 annual license renewals?

7 VICE CHAIR: Madam chair, I would like to
8 make a motion. I would -- I move to consider 61 of the
9 annual licenses for renewal and make another motion for
10 a conditional approval of Curaleaf's annual license for
11 their Bordentown dispensary.

12 CHAIR: Thank you, Vice Chair Nash. I
13 believe commissioner -- I believe Director Riggs is
14 only recommending 61 in this full group.

15 VICE CHAIR: Okay.

16 CHAIR: Director Riggs, can you confirm or
17 correct?

18 DIR. RIGGS: That is confirmed. We are
19 recommending 61 renewals.

20 VICE CHAIR: Gotcha.

21 THE SECRETARY: Curaleaf is not on that
22 list of 61 renewals.

23 VICE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.

24 COMM. MAPP: I second the 61.

25 CHAIR: So Vice Chair Nash has moved to

1 approve 61 and Commissioner Mapp is -- is seconding the
2 motion to approve the group of 61 applications.

3 VICE CHAIR: Apologies for that.

4 CHAIR: That's all right. Is there any
5 discussion on this motion to approve the group of 61
6 annual license renewals? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
7 Said, can you please call the vote?

8 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

9 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

11 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

13 CHAIR: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
15 next item up for consideration is the adult use
16 cannabis business annual license renewal application
17 for Curaleaf.

18 CHAIR: Thank you. Director Riggs, the
19 floor is yours.

20 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. This
21 is Curaleaf's retail license in Bordentown, New Jersey.
22 They're up for renewal. I'm recommending that we have
23 a conditional approval of Curaleaf's renewal. Curaleaf
24 submitted its renewal documentation and its
25 certification indicating and checking the box that it

1 did not have or maintain a labor peace agreement.

2 The maintenance of a labor peace agreement
3 is required by statute under the CREAMM Act, it is also
4 required by our regulations. Curaleaf Bordentown's
5 adult use license is set to expire on October 30th of
6 2025. We are recommending that the condition of
7 renewal be that an LPA be submitted prior to October
8 30th before the expiration date on the current annual
9 license.

10 And if no LPA is submitted, the license
11 will not be approved for renewal. And with that
12 recommendation, I turn the floor back over to you.
13 Thank you, Madam Chair.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
15 there any questions from the board regarding Director
16 Riggs' recommendation? Hearing no -- no questions, is
17 there a motion on this matter -- this recommendation
18 from Director Riggs?

19 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chair, I move to
20 approve the conditional approval for Curaleaf's
21 Bordentown Dispensary.

22 COMM. MAPP: I second.

23 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Nash to
24 conditionally approve the annual license renewal for
25 Curaleaf at their Bordentown location. Seconded by

1 Commissioner Mapp. Is there any discussion on this
2 motion to conditionally approve the Bordentown license?
3 I wanna thank Director Riggs for his explanation of the
4 situation regarding this one. And his -- his
5 recommendation for conditional approval.

6 I agree that giving Curaleaf the
7 additional time to submit the required labor peace
8 agreement is beneficial. And I hope that they comply
9 with the statute so that they can be renewed. And if
10 they choose not to, then of course that is their --
11 their decision and thus the license would not be
12 renewed. Any additional discussion on this motion?

13 Hearing no further discussion on the
14 motion to conditionally approve the annual license
15 renewal for Curaleaf, and on the condition that the --
16 a labor peace agreement be provided to the -- the
17 Commission by October 30th, Mr. Said, can you please
18 call the vote?

19 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

20 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

22 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

24 CHAIR: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The

1 next item up for consideration are determinations of
2 rehabilitation.

3 CHAIR: Thank you. Director Riggs, I'll
4 turn the floor over to you.

5 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. And
6 I'm gonna immediately turn the floor over to our Chief
7 counsel, Dave Tuason, to present these items to the
8 board.

9 MR. DAVE TUASON: Thanks,
10 Director Riggs. So today we have three applications
11 for rehabilitation. There are three ATC employees.
12 They all received notice that the criminal -- criminal
13 history check revealed disqualifying conviction. Each
14 of these individuals were given the opportunity to
15 challenge the accuracy of the criminal history or
16 request determination for rehabilitation. They all
17 submitted their application for rehabilitation.

18 Staff has reviewed and -- and deemed that
19 they have -- they're compliant with all the -- the
20 enabling statute and our regulations. And all three
21 are recommended for approval. And with that, I turn it
22 back over to you, Madam Chair.

23 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
24 there any questions from -- from the board for our
25 chief counsel? Hearing no questions from the board, is

1 there a motion on this matter?

2 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chair, I move to
3 approve the resolution for determination of
4 rehabilitation for these three individuals.

5 COMM. MAPP: I second.

6 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Nash and
7 seconded by Commissioner Mapp. Is there any discussion
8 on this motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can
9 you please call the vote?

10 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

11 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

13 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

15 CHAIR: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
17 next item up for consideration are requests for rule
18 waivers.

19 CHAIR: Thank you. Chief Counsel, I'll
20 turn the floor back over to you to describe the rule
21 waiver requests submitted.

22 MR. TUASON: Thank you, Madam
23 Chair. Yes, we have several waiver requests that the
24 board will be considering today. In order for the
25 board to grant a waiver of our regulatory requirements,

1 they must determine that they meet the three factors
2 under 17:30-3.7 which states that the commission may
3 waive a regulatory requirement.

4 If such a waiver is necessary to achieve
5 the purposes of the act, two is necessary to provide
6 access to cannabis items to consumers, and three, does
7 not create a danger to the public health, safety or
8 welfare.

9 So can you -- so the first waiver request
10 today if you can move on to the next slide, please, is
11 WR034 Blue Oak, New Jersey LLC. And they're requesting
12 a waiver of the regulatory requirements and -- and to
13 waive -- if -- if those were waived, then we would be
14 able -- the commission would be able to permit the sale
15 of hemp derived THC and CBD vendors. And with that, I
16 turn it over to you, Madam Chair.

17 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
18 there any questions for Chief Counsel Tuason? Chief
19 Counsel, now, state law, the CREAMM Act prohibits the
20 sale of food and beverages in cannabis dispensaries,
21 correct?

22 MR. TUASON: Yes -- yes, the
23 -- the CREAMM Act defines cannabis as not hemp.
24 They're two separate -- they are two separate things in
25 -- in the definitions of the CREAMM Act and although

1 there was some legislation passed on hemp, that is all
2 mostly on hold on litigation. So as it stands today,
3 the definition of cannabis is not hemp.

4 CHAIR: Thank you. Any additional
5 questions from the board?

6 VICE CHAIR: Chief Tuason, I just want to
7 understand this. So this isn't necessarily waiving a
8 regulatory requirement because the definition is
9 explicit between hemp and cannabis, we are not able to
10 waive a statute, is that accurate?

11 MR. TUASON: That's accurate.
12 We do have -- so the regulatory requirement under 1.1-C
13 also articulates that our licensees can sell only
14 cannabis, but that is derived from the statute --
15 statutory requirement and that -- that cannabis is not
16 hemp. So -- so it -- we would not be able to waive the
17 regulatory requirements since it is derived from that
18 statute and the board cannot waive any statutory
19 requirements.

20 VICE CHAIR: Thank you for that
21 clarification.

22 CHAIR: Any additional questions? Hearing
23 no additional questions from the board --

24 COMM. MAPP: I do -- I do.

25 CHAIR: Oh, yes. Commissioner Mapp, yes.

1 COMM. MAPP: So you are saying that this
2 is out of our jurisdiction. We cannot make a decision
3 on something like this because it is not within the --
4 our -- the laws that we follow?

5 MR. TUASON: Well, it -- so
6 it is within the laws that we follow. However, the
7 legislature is the only one that has the ability to
8 amend the statute. The -- the board cannot waive a
9 statutory requirement. So in a sense, yes, it is
10 outside of the board's jurisdiction because of that
11 music.

12 COMM. MAPP: Okay. Thank you.

13 CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you,
14 Commissioner Mapp. Is there a motion on this matter?

15 VICE CHAIR: Madam chair, I move to deny
16 the request for the waiver of Blue Oak based on the
17 discussion that we just had with Chief Tuason.

18 CHAIR: Is there a second?

19 COMM. MAPP: I second.

20 CHAIR: Is there any discussion on this
21 motion to deny the request? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
22 Said, can you please call the vote on the denial of
23 request WR034?

24 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

25 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

2 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

3 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

4 CHAIR: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

6 MR. TUASON: Next slide
7 please. So the next waiver request today is WR037 from
8 NAR group. They request a waiver of NJAC 17:30A-
9 7.9(a). And that's a regulatory requirement that --
10 essentially that and ATC require all cultivation sites
11 for -- for an ATC to be located within the same region.
12 So they're -- they're requesting a waiver of that
13 requirement. And with that, I turn it back over to
14 you, Madam Chair.

15 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
16 there any questions from the board for Chief Counsel
17 Tuason? Is there --

18 VICE CHAIR: (Inaudible).

19 CHAIR: Yes.

20 VICE CHAIR: I have a general question
21 about, this is -- this is -- this is a cult -- a
22 medical cultivator. And I understand that it is first
23 a statutory requirement that the same with the previous
24 one, we are not able to waive, but if we were, we would
25 have to waive it for all of the 2019 awardees, is that

1 right?

2 MR. TUASON: Well, I think
3 for this -- for this request, it was only requesting
4 for this individual -- individual entity. So what the
5 board would be deciding today would be specifically as
6 to NAR group. I think other -- in -- in the event that
7 the board would vote to approve this request, then it -
8 - then other entities would have the ability to then
9 request it for their -- for their own initial
10 circumstances.

11 VICE CHAIR: Okay. All right. I
12 understand. Thank you, Counsel.

13 CHAIR: Any additional questions for Chief
14 Counsel? Hearing no additional questions, is there a
15 motion on this matter? I'll again ask if there is a
16 motion on this matter?

17 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chair, based on the
18 restriction on waiving a statutory requirement, I'm
19 going to deny the waiver for WRO37.

20 CHAIR: Vice Chair Nash moves to deny the
21 request. Is there a second on this motion?

22 COMM. MAPP: I'll second the denial.

23 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Mapp. Is
24 there any discussion on this motion to deny the
25 request? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, on the

1 motion to deny the waiver request, can you please call
2 the vote?

3 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

4 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

6 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

8 CHAIR: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

10 MR. TUASON: Next slide
11 please. So the next waiver request is WR038 from
12 Genuine grow LLC. They are requesting waiver of the
13 regulatory requirement under fees to defer licensing
14 fees until its manufacturing license is operational
15 before they pay those fees. With that, I'll turn it
16 back over to you, Madam Chair.

17 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
18 there any questions for the board? I have one
19 question. Chief Counsel, our fees for the, I believe,
20 these were for background investigations for financial
21 sources. These are in our regulations and were -- the
22 background investigations were done as part of the
23 license application or were they done separately?

24 Like is this -- does Genuine Grow LLC have
25 their approval for their license already and separately

1 they then wanted to get the add-on financial sources
2 that triggered the -- these background investigation
3 fees or were they -- is it done -- was it done
4 simultaneously?

5 MR. TUASON: Yeah, my -- my
6 understanding is OCI does the -- the background checks,
7 like during the application process. So those are --
8 those are a fees that were incurred in -- in that -- in
9 that process of doing the background check and the, you
10 know, financial source checks and things like that.

11 So that's why the, you know -- you know,
12 although there's nothing in a -- in the regulations
13 that -- that address timing of the -- of the -- the
14 payment, those are fees that were done in the course of
15 the investigation.

16 CHAIR: So Genuine Grow LLC, can we -- can
17 staff confirm whether Genuine Grow LLC has already been
18 issued or -- I'm sorry, approved for an annual license?
19 And it's okay if you need -- if staff need to take a
20 moment to -- to look into that.

21 MR. TUASON: Sure, we need to
22 take a look at that one.

23 CHAIR: Okay.

24 MR. TUASON: Yes, they were -
25 - they were already approved for this.

1 CHAIR: Okay. All right. So did they
2 provide a -- an explanation of why they were seeking to
3 add on these financial sources if they didn't have the
4 funds to pay for the background checks, the background
5 investigation?

6 MR. TUASON: You know, and
7 their -- their waiver request essentially just, you
8 know, argues that letting them pay the fees later will
9 allow it to become operational. But I don't believe
10 expressed a -- an explanation for why, to address your
11 question.

12 CHAIR: Okay. I -- I find -- the thing
13 that I find concerning here is the idea that our fees
14 are clear -- clearly stated upfront. I believe the
15 background investigation fees for financial sources, I
16 think that's been in our regulations probably since
17 2021 or 2022. So it's not clear to me where the -- the
18 need is coming from especially if they've already had
19 gotten approval for their annual license application.

20 So at present, I'm -- while I'm supportive
21 of allowing payment plans ahead of license issuance,
22 but I don't -- it's not within the commission's
23 practice or policy of issuing a license and then
24 letting businesses pay for licensing fees or anything
25 like that. So at present, I'm not convinced that this

1 waiver request meets the three prongs for -- for
2 granting a waiver.

3 Although I am open to hearing from my --
4 my colleagues, my other -- other board, my -- my fellow
5 board members to see if they find or if they came
6 across anything that does illustrate satisfaction of
7 those three prongs. Commissioner Mapp, it looked like
8 -- I wasn't sure if you were trying to speak. It
9 looked like you were trying to speak of for a moment.

10 COMM. MAPP: I -- I don't understand why
11 they need -- I need some clarification on why they need
12 the waiver because the expenses have already been
13 incurred and the policy -- if the policy is that you
14 pay as you go, that's a deviation from the policy. So
15 I would not really be in agreement with this.

16 VICE CHAIR: I -- I would be open to
17 helping out a business to allow them to pay over time,
18 but to wait until business becomes operational, I do
19 have concerns because it can take a lot of -- a lot of
20 time. So I'm not so sure I'm -- I'm in approval of
21 this one for that reason.

22 CHAIR: Thank you both. But with that, I
23 don't have any further questions for Chief Counsel
24 Tuason. Thank you so much. Is -- are there any other
25 questions for Chief Counsel? Hearing no further

1 questions, is there a motion on this matter? I will
2 move to deny the waiver request for the reasons or
3 previously articulated.

4 However, I do want to encourage, I would
5 like to ask staff if we could maybe see what -- get a
6 better understanding of what their -- their issue is,
7 but at present it seems that the -- the waiver request
8 does not meet the three require -- the three criteria
9 for waiving a rule. So that is the motion that I --
10 that I'm making.

11 VICE CHAIR: I'll second that.

12 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is
13 there any discussion on this motion to deny the waiver
14 request? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, on the
15 motion to deny the waiver request, can you please call
16 the vote?

17 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

18 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

19 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

20 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

22 CHAIR: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

24 MR. TUASON: The final waiver
25 request the board will be considering today is WR039

1 from Hello High Dispensary, LLC. It is waiver of the
2 regulatory requirement to increase the amount of usable
3 cannabis and cannabis products in a single sales
4 transaction and multiple sales transactions.

5 Essentially the -- the one-ounce sales
6 limit is what they're looking to -- to waive. And that
7 is again, another statutory requirement (inaudible) are
8 derived from that one-ounce limit in -- in the statute.
9 And that would -- I'll turn it back over to you, Madam
10 Chair.

11 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
12 there any questions from the board regarding this
13 waiver request? Hearing no questions, is there a
14 motion on this matter?

15 COMM. MAPP: Madam chair, I make the
16 motion that we deny this request based on the statute
17 and that we cannot arbitrarily change the statute.

18 VICE CHAIR: And I'll second that.

19 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Mapp and
20 seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is there any discussion
21 on this motion to deny the waiver request? Hearing no
22 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

24 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

1 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou

3 CHAIR: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
5 next item up for consideration are notices of
6 enforcement actions.

7 CHAIR: Thank you. Director Riggs, I'll
8 turn the floor over to -- oh, sorry. Getting the
9 signal that it's Chief Counsel Tuason maybe?

10 DIR. RIGGS: No, no, that's me. I was --

11 CHAIR: Oh, it is, it is. I'm sorry.

12 DIR. RIGGS: -- just trying to get off
13 mute. We're just trying to get off mute.

14 CHAIR: Sorry. I'll turn the floor over
15 to you, Director Riggs, to describe the notice of
16 violation that have been issued.

17 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you very much. Can we
18 go to the next slide, please? There are two
19 enforcement actions up for consideration today.
20 Greater purpose INV 97-25, which is a manufacturer that
21 was using unapproved vehicles to transfer cannabis for
22 business purposes. And then the Honorable plant INV
23 117-25, which is effectuating an ownership change prior
24 to board approval.

25 We should take them one by one. So I'll

1 go with Greater Purpose first and explain that to the
2 board. Greater Purpose essentially, they were using
3 unapproved vehicles to transfer cannabis. As I stated,
4 they were a manufacturer. Their corrective action plan
5 shows that they've taken sufficient steps, in my
6 opinion, to follow the regulations to ensure that
7 they're following the regulations to make sure that
8 they're in compliance.

9 However, they do admit that they were
10 using those unapproved vehicles. They were -- they
11 seem to be aware and savvy operators of the
12 regulations. So the violation remains for the use of
13 the unapproved vehicles, and therefore, we are
14 recommending an enforcement action be taken by the
15 board. Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
17 there any questions from the board regarding Greater
18 Purpose? Hearing no questions, is there a motion on
19 this matter?

20 COMM. MAPP: Madam Chair, I make the
21 motion that we impose a fine on Greater Purpose in the
22 amount of \$2,500 for the use of two unauthorized
23 vehicles.

24 VICE CHAIR: And I'll second that.

25 CHAIR: Right. Is there any discussion on

1 this motion to impose a fine in the amount of \$2,500?
2 Hearing no -- well, actually, I'll note that I agree
3 with staff's determination that this does count as a
4 category five violation per our regulations.

5 I do believe that Commissioner Mapp's
6 suggestion of \$2,500 is reasonable and is consistent
7 with our regulations. I think it also does -- is
8 consistent with prior policy and practice for this kind
9 of violation. And so I'm -- I'm happy to support
10 Commissioner Mapp's motion.

11 Any further discussion on this motion?
12 Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Said, can you please
13 call the vote?

14 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

15 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

17 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou

19 CHAIR: Yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

21 CHAIR: Then next, I'll turn back -- the
22 floor back over to Director Riggs to discuss that
23 second notice of violation.

24 DIR. RIGGS: Yes, no problem. Can we go
25 to the next slide, please? The Honorable Plant, we can

1 go to the -- yeah, there we go for the vote. The
2 Honorable Plant has INV 117-25. They effectuated an
3 ownership change prior to board approval. Documents
4 seem to indicate that. And they did submit a
5 corrective action plan and, and speak of a redemption
6 clause in the agreement.

7 However, our assigned investigator
8 reviewed all the documents, spoke to individuals and
9 has come to the conclusion that by all accounts, that
10 ownership change did occur prior to board approval, and
11 therefore, we are recommending that an enforcement
12 action be taken. Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
14 there any questions from the board for Director Riggs?
15 Hearing no questions, is there a motion on this matter?

16 COMM. MAPP: Madam Chair, I make the
17 motion that we impose a fine against Honorable Plant
18 for removing the member without CRC approval in the
19 amount of \$5,000.

20 VICE CHAIR: And I'll second that.

21 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Mapp,
22 seconded by Vice Chair Nash. Is there any discussion
23 on this motion?

24 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

25 CHAIR: Vice Chair Nash.

1 VICE CHAIR: I -- I read the investigator
2 report and I feel that the responses from the
3 applicant's -- the applicants were not satisfactory and
4 just didn't jive. So I think that Commissioner Mapp's
5 \$5,000 fine is fair and applicable here.

6 CHAIR: Thank you, Vice Chair Nash. Is
7 there any further discussion? Hearing no further
8 discussion on this motion to impose a fine on the
9 amount of \$5,000, Mr. Said, can you please call the
10 vote?

11 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

12 CHAIR: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Nash?

14 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

16 CHAIR: Yes.

17 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
18 next item on the agenda, we have the open public
19 comment period?

20 CHAIR: We -- before we open the floor up
21 to -- for the public comments, I want to underscore
22 that the commission takes no pleasure in imposing
23 penalties on businesses. We want our businesses to get
24 and stay in compliance but when businesses choose not
25 to follow the rules, it is the commission's duty to

1 enforce those rules.

2 The rules have been on the books for a
3 long time, so there's little excuse for claiming that
4 people did not know what is expected of them. This is
5 not an area where it's better to ask for forgiveness
6 instead of permission. So for our businesses, if you
7 are unsure, if you -- if something that you want to do
8 is allowed, strongly encourage you to e-mail your
9 assigned compliance officer before you do it.

10 I encourage e-mails instead of phone calls
11 because -- so that way businesses have written proof of
12 the guidance that is received from our agency. Our
13 Office of Compliance and Investigation wants to
14 encourage compliance and the office has been very
15 generous with giving warnings to our regulated
16 businesses or businesses. It's -- it is in your best
17 interest to -- to heed those warnings, correct any
18 problems that are being pointed out and avoid being
19 cited a notice of violation.

20 I wanna thank our team members and the
21 Office of Compliance and Investigation for their work
22 in catching all the violations that have been -- have
23 come before the board to date. And I also wanna thank
24 cannabis workers because sometimes they are also the
25 ones who are blowing the whistle on bad behavior and

1 helping -- helping us hold businesses accountable for
2 their actions. So thank you to everyone involved to
3 make sure that we are really giving meaning to our
4 rules and regulations.

5 Now for public comments, the reminder that
6 members of the public can submit written comments to
7 the board either during or after this board meeting via
8 our website, nj.gov/cannabis/meetings. The deadline
9 for submitting written comments for today's meeting is
10 5:00 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, October 2nd. Written
11 comments will be shared with the commission members and
12 they will be made public.

13 Mr. Said will call on our speakers who
14 have been -- who have signed up to speak. Speakers
15 will be limited to just three minutes. When your name
16 is called, please take a note of the instructions that
17 are on the -- the current slide for raising your hand.
18 Dial star nine to raise your hand if you're dialing by
19 phone, and then press star six if you are -- to unmute
20 yourself.

21 So again, those -- those instructions are
22 star nine and star six for those who are joining us by
23 phone. Mr. Said, can you please call on our first
24 speakers?

25 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Chairwoman. As

1 a reminder, public speakers during this afternoon's
2 public comment period will be limited to three minutes.
3 Please be respectful and concise during your comments.
4 I will also give a 32nd heads up for your time. The
5 first person on the list is Erin Bell.

6 If you're in the room, please raise your
7 hand. I see Erin. Before I -- I allow you to speak,
8 I'm just going to ask that everyone that is signed up
9 to speak at today's meeting, please change your name to
10 the name that you signed up with so that I know that
11 this is the correct person to allow to speak. Thank
12 you. Erin, you have the floor.

13 MS. ERIN BELL: Oh, good afternoon
14 commissioners and thank you for allowing me to speak
15 today. My name is Erin Bell and I'm here to share my
16 experience of being wrongfully terminated from
17 Shipwreck'd Dispensary, along with the experiences of
18 many of my coworkers who supported unionization.

19 When I accepted this job, I did so with
20 hope and trust. I was promised full-time hours,
21 benefits, and the stability to balance work while
22 finishing college. I turned down two other dispensary
23 offers because I believed in those promises. I
24 believed that Shipwreck'd valued its employees and
25 would provide a safe and fair workplace.

1 Instead, I spent the first few months
2 waiting for work. My phone was shut off, my storage
3 unit was at risk, and my finances were hanging by a
4 thread. That's the reality I faced trying to trust an
5 employer who had made commitments they did not keep.
6 At first, I was given 40 hours a week, but very
7 quickly, those hours were cut. I was sent home mid-
8 shift, and at one point I was reduced to only 10 hours
9 in a week.

10 Despite consistently achieving perfect
11 hills, strong sales, and regularly upselling to
12 customers, I was ultimately fired. There was no
13 explanation that made sense. No conversation about
14 performance or behavior, just sudden termination. The
15 environment was solely -- openly hostile. One day in
16 the lunchroom, the general manager asked me directly
17 whether he should fire half the team or just keep
18 everyone's hours cut and try to be fair.

19 When I later told a coworker about this,
20 they said that they had made the same comment to them,
21 and that kind of rhetoric repeated across employees
22 shows a blatant disregard for the disability and
23 livelihood of the team. It was not a question of
24 policy; it was a threat to -- meant to intimidate. It
25 wasn't just me who suffered, every single worker who

1 signed a union card was let go.

2 I have proof of text messages from
3 coworkers who wanted to sign, but were too afraid of
4 losing their jobs as well as others expressed interest
5 in signing. Their fears were rooted in past
6 experiences at other dispensaries where the attempts to
7 unionize had been met with retaliation. At this time,
8 we had already reached 43% of workers showing interest,
9 needing just two more signatures to hit the 51%
10 threshold.

11 Management's intimidation and retaliation
12 stopped us from reaching that goal. On top of that, I
13 have documentation of a marketing packet. I personally
14 created an e-mailed directly to the company CFO. I was
15 told I would present it in a meeting with ownership.
16 That meeting never happened. Instead, I was fired.
17 And my work, my ideas, time and creativity remain in
18 their possession without credit or compensation.

19 This is fought about far more than just
20 losing a paycheck. I am now left without a job,
21 struggling to pay my bills and trying to stay in
22 school. My coworkers, people who showed up with
23 dedication and passion are also left without stability.

24 THE SECRETARY: 30 seconds.

25 MS. BELL: The cannabis industry was built

1 on promises of equity and opportunity and fairness, but
2 those promises are meaningless if workers can be
3 misled, intimidated, or retaliated against for
4 exercising their legal right to unionize.

5 I urge the commission to hold Shipwreck'd
6 accountable and to take a closer look at employment
7 practices across dispensaries. Workers are the
8 backbone of this country, and all we are asking for is
9 dignity, fairness, and the ability to do the work we
10 love without fear. Thank you for your time in
11 considering action to make sure no other worker has to
12 go through what we did.

13 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Erin. The next
14 person on the list is Donald Campbell. Donald
15 Campbell, if you're in the room, please raise your
16 hand. Last four is -- last four of the telephone
17 number is 9605. I don't see Donald. The next person
18 on the list is Steven Prager. If you're in the room,
19 please raise your hand. Steven Prager, last four is
20 1890. I don't see Steven.

21 The next person on the list is Kathy
22 Bisignano. If you're in the room, Kathy Bisignano,
23 please raise your hand. The last four is 8444. I
24 don't see Kathy. The next person on the list is Todd
25 Johnson. If you're in the room, please raise your

1 hand. Last four is 930 -- okay, I see you Todd. Todd,
2 you have the floor.

3 MR. TODD JOHNSON: Thank you. Good
4 afternoon, Chair Houenou, Vice Chair Nash, Commissioner
5 Mapp, Director Riggs and CRC staff members. My name is
6 Todd Johnson and I serve as Executive director of the
7 New Jersey Cannabis Trade Association. Our membership
8 is comprised exclusively of CRC licensed businesses
9 operating in New Jersey. I provided testimony at last
10 month's CRC meeting and implored the CRC to make it
11 less challenging to operate a successful cannabis
12 business.

13 Today I'll be discussing the social equity
14 excise fee. An actual tax that is well intended, but
15 it is making it more difficult for cannabis operators
16 to succeed, especially those social equity diversely
17 owned, women owned and veteran owned entrepreneurs.

18 First, I wanna express the NJCTA support
19 for the noble intentions of the CIF, which seeks to
20 acknowledge the hypocrisy of the failed war drugs and
21 reinvest in social equity initiatives in the very same
22 communities that were targeted with over enforcement.

23 Our association wholeheartedly supports
24 these funds being used to help right the wrongs of the
25 past. And we are eager to see the positive impact

1 these funds and associated initiatives have on impact
2 zones and underserved communities of color. These
3 communities need equitable ownership and employment
4 opportunities in the legal cannabis industry.

5 Unfortunately, in its current form, the
6 CIF does not accomplish this goal. When increased
7 annually, the CIF cripples legal operators by making
8 cannabis prices higher throughout the supply chain.
9 Price increases encourage consumers to shift their
10 spending and purchase cannabis from cheaper and less
11 safe unregulated outlets further weakening the legal
12 industry.

13 In addition to higher costs for all, the
14 CIF has an outsized negative impact on smaller
15 entrepreneurs; businesses owned by social equity and
16 diversely owned operators, as they lack the larger
17 operators scale and ability to offset higher taxes. In
18 your letter to the governor and legislature last year,
19 the commission recommended that CIF generated funds be
20 used to provide grants and low interest loans to this
21 very same group of entrepreneurs.

22 The NJCTA supports this idea as it builds
23 upon the successful NJEDA program that has helped get
24 local entrepreneurs up and running. Instead, the
25 governor and legislature decided to allocate SEEF

1 derived revenues to community-based violence
2 intervention programs, a line item that already has
3 over \$100 million allowance in the state's severely
4 limited budget.

5 Do we know if SEEF funds have -- even
6 been disbursed? Do we have any evidence at all
7 that the funds have made a meaningful impact on the
8 intended communities? We know for a fact that
9 cannabis operators have paid a steep price --

10 THE SECRETARY: 30 seconds.

11 MR. JOHNSON: -- trade off. Last October,
12 the majority of this commission voiced concerns about
13 raising the SEEF. One would think we we'd see a
14 different methodology for decision making following
15 last year's debacle. We need stakeholder conversations
16 occurring so that the impacts of raising the fee are
17 better understood.

18 Sadly, nothing of the sort has taken place
19 leading up to this decision this year. Increasing the
20 fee now is a betrayal of the original legislation
21 spirit. We urge the commission to collaborate with
22 stakeholders, freeze the SEEF at \$2.50 per ounce, and
23 focus all efforts on immediately funding the programs
24 recommended in the 2024 CRC report. Do the right thing
25 and support entrepreneurs. Thank you very much for

1 your time today.

2 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Todd. The next
3 person on the list is Julie Aziz. If you're in the
4 room, last four is 4367. Julie Aziz. I don't see
5 Julie. The next person on the list is Andrea Raible.
6 Last four is 0229. If you're in the room, please raise
7 your hand. Okay. I see you, Andrea.

8 Andrea, you have the floor. Andrea, if
9 you're going to unmute yourself, it is star six. And
10 Andrea, if you can hear me, it's star six to unmute
11 yourself. Try speaking now.

12 CHAIR: Andrea, we still can't hear you.
13 It might have -- might be an issue, if you're using
14 headphones maybe try disconnecting the headphones and
15 reconnecting or just using the handset but we're still
16 having trouble. We can see that you are unmuting
17 yourself, but we can't hear anything.

18 THE SECRETARY: And -- and just a
19 reminder, it's star six to unmute. So I see that
20 you're unmuting, but we -- we still can't hear you. If
21 you're using like a headpiece or something, try
22 disconnecting from the headpiece.

23 MS. ANDREA RAIBLE: Hello?

24 THE SECRETARY: Yes, we can hear you now.

25 MS. RAIBLE: Okay. I -- I apologize. I'm

1 not on headphones or anything, so I'm not sure what's
2 going on.

3 THE SECRETARY: No worries. But the floor
4 is yours.

5 MS. RAIBLE: All right. Thank you.
6 Sorry, everybody about the delay. I would like to say
7 thank you to the commission for opting to use a full
8 agenda at this meeting. I know typically virtual
9 meetings have a condensed agenda where we're not able
10 to hear some of the updates on the data and the
11 enforcements and the things that consumers are looking
12 to see out of these meetings.

13 So I really do appreciate you sticking in
14 there. I know it was a long one today, but this
15 transparency helps. And on the line of transparency, I
16 appreciate the clarity you provided on the line between
17 statutory-like legislative regulations and things that
18 can be handled within the CRC. I believe that we do
19 need a lot more legislative support.

20 I think the CRC has a lot of good
21 intentions and I think we need more resources to be
22 able to match the speed at which the market is
23 expanding. I know a lot of times it seems like patient
24 issues and business desires go head-to-head, but there
25 is a lot of common ground like Todd Johnson from the

1 Trade Association was saying, we would love to see more
2 stakeholder involvement in decision making.

3 There -- the SEEF fund, which has good
4 intentions, hasn't been put into effect yet. And I
5 know that's not entirely within your control but -- but
6 there are common grounds where the industry and
7 patients have overlap and the SEEF fund is one of them.
8 Higher prices on medicine or higher prices for
9 consumers is just another barrier to accessing
10 medicine we truly need and the quantities that we truly
11 need.

12 Things like raising the patient limits or
13 raising the medical adult use limits are important and
14 -- because they can foster both industry development
15 and patient safety. If we dial in and focus on the
16 areas where we have overlap, we can have -- we can
17 further develop a system that works for all of the
18 members in New Jersey, not just the industry hold --
19 not just the license holders.

20 And I really hope -- I understand our
21 commission's been limited right now only having three
22 members, but I do wanna applaud how hard you've worked
23 to keep the commission moving at full steam despite
24 your limited board.

25 THE SECRETARY: 30 seconds.

1 MS. RAIBLE: I'm having some symptoms on
2 my end and I don't wanna go over time. So I would just
3 like to say, I know it can be difficult when it feels
4 like a lot of people are putting pressure or are
5 detractors. We do recognize the good that you're doing
6 in the industry, but we also recognize the potential
7 for the industry to be stronger. For consumers to have
8 more transparency and trust in the market and for
9 industry members to not be so tied up with red tape.

10 We're looking for this to be a
11 collaborative process and I look forward to the meeting
12 in December. Thank you.

13 THE SECRETARY: Thank you, Andrea. I'm
14 going to go over the list one more time for the people
15 that signed up that didn't get a chance to speak.
16 Donald Campbell, if you're in the room. Donald
17 Campbell, I don't see Donald. Next person is Steven
18 Prager. If you're in the room, please raise your hand.
19 I don't see Steven.

20 Kathy Bisignano, if you're in the room,
21 please raise your hand. The next person is Julie Aziz.
22 If you're in the room, please raise your hand. I don't
23 see Julie. Chairwoman Houenou, this will conclude the
24 registered speakers we have for today's public meeting.

25 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. And thank

1 you to -- to everyone who shared their experiences and
2 their ideas and suggestions for the commission. Again,
3 anyone who wants to submit written comments to the
4 commission, you can do so in writing by going to our
5 website nj.gov/cannabis/meetings. And the deadline to
6 submit comments for today's meeting is five o'clock
7 tomorrow, Thursday, October 2nd.

8 This concludes the business that we have
9 before us today. So with that, I move that we adjourn.
10 Is there a second?

11 VICE CHAIR: Second.

12 CHAIR: Is there any discussion on this
13 motion to adjourn? Hearing no discussion, all those in
14 favor of adjourning say aye?

15 CHAIR: Aye.

16 COMM. MAPP: Aye.

17 VICE CHAIR: Aye.

18 CHAIR: All those opposed say nay. Any
19 abstentions? Motion passes. The time is 2:47 p.m. and
20 we are adjourned. Thank you very much everyone. Have
21 a great rest of the day. Happy Yom Kippur to those who
22 celebrate and we'll see you next time. Bye bye.

23 VICE CHAIR: Thank you.

24 (Meeting concluded)

25