

My name is Grace Merkes and my

Address- 38300 Stans st, in Sterling

Thank you for this opportunity to speak & hello to Assembly members and Mayor Navarre

Tonight I would like to speak on both Local Option zone district and also on the issue of Marijuana retail sales, growing it and production and packaging it.

And I want to apologize for not giving my opinion in the earlier discussions of the LOZD or the Marijuana permitting process.

Now I have to say I am very disappointed in the lack of any protection that is being considered for borough residents in regard to commercializing marijuana. I understand there was not enough support on the assembly to limit or stop the commercial pot business in the borough for a time.

I am sure you all know that Soldotna has put a 2 yr moratorium on commercial businesses of pot. Kenai has designated certain zones for pot businesses, Homer is considering the pot issue this week, I think Wasilla and Palmer have banned commercial pot for a period of time,

So that tells me the majority of the cities think there is not enough information out there regarding the pot business and they are attempting to protect their citizens until more is known about the business. So now I want you, the whole assembly, to take care of our borough citizens. We don't want all the pot business pushed out into the borough.

So here are a couple of things I am hoping you will do especially because the majority of the citizens live outside of cities you need to protect them just like the cities are protecting their citizens.

In regard to the LOZD;

I think it is not fair to ask the borough residents to zone themselves just so they can protect themselves from having pot establishments in their mist but if they do choose to do a LOZD then:

1. I believe the regs say you can have a business in your home so does that include pot sales business? Need to say no commercial Pot businesses in LOZD.
2. I would request you to add back the C3 zone that was deleted . At least that way borough residents could still be less restrictive on their own property which is the reason most people live outside of a city.
3. I also request that you need to keep the 500 ft. buffer around an LOZD and not reduce it to 300 ft. Or change Special Use permits to exclude Commercial pot businesses in the buffer area.
4. I am not sure why the minimum lot size in the R1 has to be 40,000 sq ft. A lot of borough lots are less than 40,000 sq ft.

5. If a person opts in to a LOZD with a parcel larger than 5 acres there needs to be a provision in the regs on being able for that property owner to opt out without approval of 75% of the lots in the LOZD.

Now in regard to the Pot issue, I know it was voted on to allow the use of it so the question is "how do the pot users get it?"

1. I think Pot needs to be limited to a certain number of retail businesses just like alcohol is, which is 3 retail sales per 5000 people. The State Law allows local control of how we regulate Pot. At least that would eliminate having unlimited numbers of pot businesses in your neighborhoods.

Please consider my ideas before you pass this LOZD ordinance and please introduce an amendment to the permit policy on Pot on how many businesses can be in a certain area. Thank you all.