

We OPPOSE HB 2233, which would allow marijuana consumption at temporary events and the creation of cannabis lounges. If approved, this proposed legislation could negatively impact rural residents of Deschutes County in a number of ways.

Crops and marijuana are grown on farmland in Oregon. Properties zoned for agricultural use should not be allowed to have any lodges, lounges, or other non-farm dwellings for commercial benefit. Increased traffic on agricultural roads, disturbances to rural residents and their livestock, and the likelihood of people driving under the influence in quiet neighborhoods is unacceptable.

The legal marijuana industry is still in the early stages of becoming established, and there are numerous issues that are problematic and may take time to evaluate. Proponents would like to continue pushing for more lenient rulings such as those proposed in HB2233. Our county was only barely in favor of legalizing recreational marijuana, and rural residents were opposed. Through tedious meetings, hearings, and input from the public, the marijuana industry, water district employees and the Sheriff's Department, rules and regulations have been established here that reflect the unique needs of this county. We are incensed that the state is now trying to override those decisions.

The OLCC is already understaffed. What guarantee is there that these employees will adequately regulate lounges and cannabis consumption at events? Will the overworked Sheriff's Department be called in to enforce these proposed sites?

If lounges and events are voted to be essential to the state of Oregon, we urge you to restrict those sites to dispensaries and locations within commercial urban neighborhoods. They do not belong in rural areas.

Sincerely,

Gretchen and Robert Pederson

Deschutes County Residents