



**Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force  
Technical Assistance & Mentorship Workgroup  
November 09, 2021  
Virtual Meeting**

**Workgroup Members Present:**

Sheley Anderson, CCC and Industry Representative  
Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead and Task Force Member  
Ian Eisenberg, Industry Representative  
Zachary Fairley, Community Representative

Jamie Hoffman, Industry Representative  
Jim Makoso, Industry Representative  
Rick Anderson, Dept of Commerce  
Carmen Rivera, CoHA and Task Force Member  
Task Force Members: Dorian Waller, Micah Sherman

**Workgroup Members Absent:**

Raft Hollingsworth, Co-Lead and Task Force Member

Joe Solorio, UFCS and Task Force Member

**Guests and Other Participants:**

Throughout the meeting, approximately 32 members of the public joined and participated. The workgroup thanks all of those who attended and shared their time, expertise, and lived experience to help shape this important work.

**Staff Support:**

Anzhane Slaughter  
Joy Hollingsworth

Crystal Ogle

**Call to Order**

Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead, called the public meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Staff shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, and reviewed the agenda. Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead facilitated introductions of members. Jim Makoso, Workgroup Member will be filling in for Raft Hollingsworth, Co-Lead for today's meeting.

**1. New Proposal – Cannabis Tax Funding**

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Task Force Member supported by Sarah Clifthorne, Policy Director, present a new Cannabis Tax funding proposal (on file) to TA&M Workgroup

members for consideration and recommendation to the Task Force. Sen. Saldaña begins with sharing some background, context and what she's learned as a legislator regarding budget. The budget process – RCW 59.50.540 WA has 2-year budget cycles, written in odd years when have longer sessions. This year is a short session. They tend to hold off on major fiscal changes until the start of the next cycle (2023). Almost 50% of these funds go to Dept of Health to lower income single adults, immigrants, community owned clinics, these are. Maybe we need better oversight on such funds, but she cautions but there are many benefits to these areas. She believes this proposal is a solid first step in 2022 to prepare for next years budget in 2023 when the robust and bold recommendations could be made. She's looking for input and feedback and views the proposal as framework. Sen. Saldana uses the powerpoint (on file) to help workgroup members and public attending understand using this visual.

## **2. Discussion and Q&A – Cannabis Tax Funding**

The workgroup discussed concern as to where previously approved recommendations, such as 10% tax revenue for grants and 5% tax revenue for loans fall into the new proposed structure. Sen. Saldaña, Task Force Member explains there are amounts for these, not percentages. They discuss what they've heard community asking for. Sen. Saldaña, Task Force Member suggests setting community requests as a goal and beginning with this proposal and reminds the workgroup that changes can be made as needed. She believes big changes such as restructuring budgets concerning the Health Care Authority and Apple Health or Education for example, will be difficult to get through a short session this year. Half of the general fund goes to education, another big and important. Tamara Berkley, Co-Lead points out that the Task Force has approved financial assistance for low interest loans and grants but hasn't yet voted on community reinvestment. She wonders if this proposal is going backwards in progress made. Micah Sherman, Member believes community has been clear and has an overwhelming desire to see 50% of tax revenue generated by Cannabis go to community reinvestment. He believes it's important to maintain this recommendation. Sen. Saldaña, Taskforce meeting apologizes but has to leave the meeting. She reminds the workgroup that based on the proposed Cannabis Tax fund she's presenting, depending on how you understand the programs, easily 50% is going to community reinvestment. She believes the issue lies in it not being used appropriately or being accountable. She would like to know what workgroup members would like to see changed in her proposal. She believes something similar to what is outlined is much more likely to get passed in a short session. Workgroup members continue the discussion after Sen. Saldaña leaves. They wonder if there's a way to track if Black and brown people are being benefitted by the programs as they are currently funded. They discuss how measurable outcomes must be able to be made at 5/10/15 years. Members also don't want to lose sight of 50%. They all believe this is a very big and important decision and the issues are not just getting licenses out but keeping social equity licensees in business. They discuss how Sen. Saldaña's proposal would work short term, but worry the goal could be lost and this is the chance to move it forward.

The workgroup then hears public comment which overwhelmingly asks to keep the recommendations as the workgroup had made, at 50% of all Cannabis Tax revenue. A public comment also suggested taking this to the governor who has the power to restructure as desired. A break is taken at this time and discussion will resume after the break.

### **3. Discussion – Cannabis Tax Funding**

After the break, workgroup members continue discussion and then land on a consensus. The majority of workgroup wants to stick with the original 50% proposal.

### **4. Discussion – Cannabis Tax Funding**

The workgroup begins discussing further details of the recommendations. They would like to include in the recommendation that allocation of funds happen as soon as possible. The group then discusses who will oversee the funds including grants and loans. Ideas include the Department of Commerce and the newly formed Office of Equity. The Office of Equity is new, and some members are unsure of their purpose and capacity. Anzhane Slaughter explains that staff spoke with Dr. Karen Johnson, the Office of Equity Executive Director, who believed they would have capacity to oversee such funds. Workgroup and public members who spoke agree that the Office of Equity would be ideal for managing the funds. Members agree to recommend that the Office of Equity oversee the funds. Discussion of using a measurable outcome to ensure funds are being used and delivered to the right people occurs, and everyone generally agrees there should be a monthly audit. One suggestion was to look into something similar to the service OMWBE provides for the Department of Transportation. There's also a call for the recommendations to go before the governor as suggested by a member of the public.

### **5. Next Steps**

Tomorrow – November 10<sup>th</sup> Licensing workgroup meeting 1pm – 4pm

November 16<sup>th</sup> - SECTF meeting time TBD

December 14<sup>th</sup> - SECTF meeting 4pm – 6pm

### **Adjournment**

Tamara Berkely, Co-Lead thanked everyone for participating and wished them a good evening. Then she adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Kelie Kahler, Washington State Board of Health Communication Manager, at 360-236-4102 or by email at [kelie.kahler@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:kelie.kahler@sboh.wa.gov) TTY users can dial 711.

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