



Draft Minutes of the Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force
October 26, 2022
Virtual Meeting

Task Force Members Present:

Jim Makoso, Co-Chair
Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair
Rep. Kelly Chambers
Rep. Debra Entenman
Sen. Curtis King
Carmen Rivera
Michelle Merriweather
Ollie Garrett

Tamara Berkley
Pablo Antonio Gonzalez
Raft Hollingsworth
Monica Martinez
Micah Sherman
Dorian Waller
Joyce Bruce
Joe Solorio

Task Force Members Absent:

Craig Bill
Alison Beason

David Mendoza

Guests and Other Participants:

Throughout the meeting, approximately 35 members of the public joined and participated. The Task Force thanks all of those who attended and shared their time, expertise, and lived experience to help shape this important work.

Staff Support:

Anzhane Slaughter
Lauren King

Crystal Ogle

Call to Order

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, called the public meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). Anzhane Slaughter, Staff shared the Zoom protocol, conversation norms, and reviewed the agenda. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, introduced a new Task Force member, Rep. Debra Enteman who is filling the seat of the democratic caucus from the house and then facilitated introductions of members asking them to share what social equity means to them.

1. Approval of October 26th Agenda & August 23rd Meeting Minutes

Motion: Approve Agenda for October 26th 2022 Meeting

Motion/Second: Michelle Merriweather/Ollie Garrett

Approved by acclimation

Motion: Approve August 23rd meeting minutes as written

Motion/Second: Micah Sherman/Tamara Berkley

Approved by acclimation

2. Report Update

Jim Makoso, Co-Chair provides the Task Force with an update on the report, sharing the work that has gone into the product so far. Staff has edited 7 drafts prior to the current one, have met with Co-Chairs weekly regarding the report, consulted the manager of the Governor's Interagency Counsel on Health Disparities for edits and input, and had input from 8 Task Force Members via one-on-one meetings that were offered to all members of the Task Force. He then asked Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to share about common themes found in one-on-ones. A few common themes members touched on wanting to hear more about included the national market, the medical marijuana transition to retail and how to support small businesses so the social equity businesses can survive.

3. Discussion – Report Themes and Vision

Jim Makoso, Co-Chair opened by explaining the desired outcome from today's discussion is to hear from all members regarding their vision for social equity in Washington. Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, opens the floor for discussion by reminding task force members that their input is appreciated and needed.

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, begins with her feedback. In general, she's happy with the direction of the report. She thinks it would be helpful to talk about the cliff of transition from medical cannabis. She wonders if actual patients who were being protected came to the table. Paul Brice, Advisory Member Tamara Berkley, Member and Monica Martinez, Member say the report seems to cover what was spoken about over the last 2 years. Sen. Curtis King, Member says he doesn't have comments. Carmen Rivera, Member, and Raft Hollingsworth, Member are very pleased with the final document. Joyce Bruce, Member believes the report is a thorough summary of what work has been done. Micah Sherman, Member believes it does a great job of telling the story of our work. Ollie Garrett, Member agrees with what everyone else is saying, that it covers step by step what was discussed.

Michelle Merriweather, Member says she made comments and reviewed for the one on one meeting and thanks staff for capturing the information. Comments that now the real work begins to make sure these recommendations are implemented. Pablo Antonio Gonzalez, Member is concerned about capturing those who have been trying at the retail business legitimately and is disappointed the amount of tax collected is not highlighted. Joe Solorio, Member says it's a culmination of the work we did and believes it's better than what he was expecting as a draft. Jim Makoso, Co-Chair believes he hears we are hitting the mark. He wonders what type of impact

it will make, will recommendations be impactful and be executed on? Will the industry accept it and get on board with it? There will be work ahead once the report is delivered for Task Force members to individually take on to make it successful.

4. Public Comment

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, asks Lauren King, Staff to facilitate public comment. Public comment includes accusations of corruption in the Task Force and LCB and discrimination on a couple individuals seeking retail licenses. One member commented that they like the draft and provided some feedback including gathering more data to include in figures. Public comment included acknowledgement of those who were impacted by the medical transition.

The Task Force adjourns for a break at 3:35 pm and returns at 3:45 pm

5. Discussion – Report Themes and Vision Continued

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, opens the floor to continued Task Force member discussion. Prior to doing this, she takes a moment to acknowledge that Rep. Kelly Chambers and Dorian Waller, Task Force members have joined us. She asks that they comment on the report. Rep. Kelly Chambers has no comments. Dorian Waller, Member would like to read it again, to dive into the historic context of equity as it relates to the industry, but at first glance it seems to represent well. One suggestion to elaborate on historical harms in section 5 was heard from a Task Force member, Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, believes page 10 is where that was attempted and perhaps we can enhance that. Another Task Force member suggestion is to add a 5th pillar to the social equity definition, and have it be acknowledging the past harms.

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, acknowledges that there have been a number of people saying they would like to read it again and therefore would entertain a motion to provide written comment to staff be extended.

Motion: Extend written comments on draft report to Staff on report by end of day, October 31st.

Motion/Second: Michelle Merriweather/Dorian Waller
Passed by acclamation

6. LCB Update – Proposed Bill and Final Rules

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, introduces Justin Nordhorn from the LCB and asks that he provide the Task Force with an update on the proposed bill regarding social equity and final rules.

Justin Nordhorn, Policy and External Affairs Advisor from the LCB begins by providing overview of proposed legislation. He reminds the Task Force and public that the governor's office has not approved the bill yet so this will only be an overview and not include too many details. They plan to reduce barriers to entry by making some mandated things optional but have incentives for them and to make them for all cannabis licensees, not just social equity licensees. There are opportunities to increase number of licenses, particularly around social equity in cannabis using a formula. In writing the bill, they are considering federal legalization and an easier adjustment if/when federal legalization happens. They would like to put the third-party vendor into statute for long term consistency. There are provisions in the transferability of a social equity license. They want to protect small business from big business, but also don't want to prevent a business owners right to sell their business. They also worked on portability with licenses, the proposal allows for an opportunity to site anywhere in the state initially, and that you don't have to have a location secured to apply. He then provided an update on the social equity program implementation and says it was adopted and are effective February 12th, 2023. Their website will have information. He wants to share that applications will not open on February 12th exactly, it will take some time and they are hoping for early 2023. He suggests watching the website for application information, there's a small list of things people can do to prepare for applying. The LCB's Social Equity Program website is: [Cannabis Social Equity | Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board](#)

7. Public Comment

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, asks Lauren King, Staff to facilitate public comment. Public comment includes disappointment in broken promises from the LCB, support for Task Force members, appreciation for working on recommendations and a plea for help from the Task Force and LCB to help a member with their local city council. Other comments including making contractors working on the social equity program Black businesses. After public comment was made, Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, asks Anzhane Slaughter, Staff to go over next steps.

8. Next Steps – Report Timeline to Prepare for Final Task Force Meeting

Anzhane Slaughter, Staff shares the timeline to prepare for the final Task Force Meeting.

November 1st: all written feedback and comments submitted by membership and public

November 22nd: final report for ADA compliance check

December 5th: deliver final report to membership

December 7th: final SECTF meeting to finalize report

December 9th: Turn in report to Governor's office, Legislature, and respective agencies.

Good of the Order & Adjournment

Sen. Rebecca Saldaña, Co-Chair, thanks everyone for their participation and wishes everyone a wonderful afternoon. She then adjourns the meeting at 5:00 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 TTY users can dial 711.

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