



December 9, 2015

Somerville Planning Board
Somerville City Hall
Aldermanic Chamber
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: Testimony regarding Proposed Somerville Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Section 7.15, Titled Medical Marijuana Treatment Facilities

To the Honorable Members of the Planning Board:

Thank you for taking the time to discuss this important issue. My name is Mike Ross and I am an attorney with the law firm of Prince Lobel, located in Boston. I represent several Medical Marijuana dispensaries throughout the state. I am presently counsel to Natural Selections, Inc., whose principal, Aidan O'Donovan, a native of Massachusetts, is presently considering locating a dispensary in Davis Square.

As I am sure you are aware, Somerville self-identifies as being "the most densely populated community in New England,"¹ Therefore, Somerville requires a permitting regime that is consistent with that density.

The existing Amendment, adopts a one-size-fits-all distance prohibition that would be better suited for rural communities. This is due to the fact that the underlying state regulations are in effect when a municipality fails to put in place specific conditions.

I am referring to distances in which a local Registered Marijuana Dispensary, or RMD, shall be sited from places where children commonly congregate. The specific language of the regulation is as follows:

¹ <http://www.somervillema.gov/about-somerville>