

John Long

From: Emily Bhargava <emily.bhargava@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 05, 2018 1:29 PM
To: Board of Aldermen
Cc: City Clerk Contact
Subject: retail marijuana regulations

To the Board of Aldermen and the members of the Planning Department,

As you move into the final stage of creating local regulations for retail marijuana in Somerville I would like you to consider **reducing the cap on the number of retail establishments to the minimum number required** for the city (6), **capping the number of businesses in each neighborhood**, and formalizing **a set back for marijuana establishments of at least 500 feet** from child-centered spaces such as playgrounds, schools and daycares.

I am a Somerville parent and also work in substance abuse prevention across Massachusetts. I am disappointed that the zoning overlay includes central business districts, because outlet density and visibility will both affect youth exposure to marijuana messaging, but we have an opportunity to assure that the density of outlets in the city overall and youth exposure to marijuana are limited by capping the number of licenses and by separating businesses from youth-focused spaces.

There is much literature to support the idea that youth use of substances is linked to ease of access, exposure to advertising, community norms, and patterns of adult use. Please help keep the youth of Somerville healthy as their brains continue to develop by setting policy that will minimize the impacts of retail marijuana on youth use rates.

Thank you,
Emily Bhargava
63 Irving St, Somerville