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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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October 9, 2018

Rachel Levine, MD
Secretary of Health
Pennsylvania Department of Health
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Medical Dispensary Locations – 4500-4502 City Ave & 5080 City Avenue

Dear Dr. Levine,

As the benefits of medical marijuana continue to grow I applaud the State of Pennsylvania and the State Department of Health for creating pathways for the people of the Commonwealth to access alternative treatment options. From aiding those fighting the symptoms of cancer treatment to trying to curb the opioid epidemic with alternative pain treatment, I believe the expansion of medical marijuana throughout the state is vital.

Unfortunately, it has been brought to my attention that two cannabis dispensaries will be opening within a half a mile of each other, one residing in my district. Even more frustrating, my constituents were the ones to bring this to my attention, not the state agencies overseeing dispensary licensing or the dispensary owners themselves. Another representative in the Philadelphia area went through a very similar situation last year and it troubles me that there has been no attempt to rectify the lack of communication. We are in the dark about the licensing process, location determinations, and timelines for planned opening of the dispensaries.

Due to lack of communication and involvement my office and the offices of surrounding local officials do not have answers for our constituents. I am requesting the PA Department of Health participate in an emergency town hall to discuss the planned dispensaries and be available to provide answers to the members of these communities.

Though cannabis dispensaries are essential to help further medical treatment for individuals, not every community is open to them and not every neighborhood is fit to house them. Therefore, I am also asking for a moratorium on granting licenses on new dispensaries until a process to involve local elected officials and the community can be developed.

In the near future, my office will be reaching out to your department to schedule some time to discuss next steps.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MOR' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Morgan Cephas
State Representative – 192nd

Cc: Governor Tom Wolf
Senator Vincent Hughes
Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr.
Nedia S. Ralston – Director, Governor's Southeast Regional Office