

From: paulvegajr@protonmail.com
To: [Lucas, Quinton](#); [Cline, LaceShionna](#); [Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment Regarding Ordinance #251028 – Support for Targeted, Ethical Cannabis Regulation
Date: Friday, January 23, 2026 10:04:02 AM

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To the Honorable Mayor Lucas and Members of the Kansas City Council,
My name is Paul Vega Jr., and I am a Kansas City resident who cares deeply about responsible policy, community safety, and common-sense governance.
I am writing in regard to Ordinance #251028 and the ongoing discussion surrounding cannabis and hemp-related measures in Kansas City and Nationally.

Seen below is a Google Drive link containing a recorded statement from my uncle, Mike Vega, a retired homicide detective who continues to serve the community in a professional capacity. Due to his current role, he is unable to attend council meetings to provide in-person testimony, but he felt strongly that his experience and perspective should be shared. When I explained the scope of this ordinance to him, he was genuinely confused—particularly given that the Council has recently taken steps to protect Kansas City residents from negative interactions related to cannabis and hemp.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18hf0oprkghnKbaAnRRS7IdATxPvPYULE/view>

As I have reviewed recent public testimony and become more involved in this issue, one thing has become increasingly clear: there are legitimate concerns that deserve attention. There are bad actors in the marketplace who operate without ethical standards—selling improperly to minors, failing to provide certificates of analysis, or using packaging that may appeal to minors. Those behaviors are unacceptable and should be addressed.

However, broad measures that effectively punish an entire sector are not the solution. Responsible, compliant operators—those who invest in community accountability—should not be treated the same as those who disregard the law. Targeted enforcement protects the public. Blanket approaches risk harming ethical small businesses, confusing consumers, and unintentionally driving activity back into unregulated spaces.

As has been publicly stated by Mayor Lucas, Kansas City has an opportunity to move away from policies that contribute to over-policing and negative community interactions, while still maintaining sensible protections and standards. I strongly support that direction.

"Mayor Quinton Lucas has announced a plan to completely remove all offenses related to marijuana possession from the city code, which he says are often pretexts for stopping people and lead to over-policing of black and brown communities and negative police interactions."

"State and federal law remain clear with marijuana," **continued Mayor Lucas**. "The City doesn't need to be in that business; instead, we remain focused on how we can help open doors to new opportunities and empower people to make a decent living."

It is also important to acknowledge the broader national context in which these local discussions are taking place. In December 2025, the White House issued an executive order directing federal agencies to expedite the process of rescheduling marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act to a less restrictive classification. While this action does not legalize marijuana at the federal level, it signals a meaningful shift in how cannabis is being approached nationally—particularly around research, medical use, and regulatory modernization. At the same time, cannabis policy has become an increasingly visible topic as

the country moves through the election cycle, with communities across the nation reassessing how to balance public safety, economic opportunity, and responsible regulation.

These national developments make it even more important that Kansas City's local policies are thoughtful, targeted, and future-minded—focused on accountability and consumer protection without reverting to overly broad enforcement structures that undermine responsible operators and community trust.

My request is simple and sincere: that the City continue to pursue targeted regulation that focuses on accountability, consumer safety, and bad actors—rather than policies that unintentionally punish responsible community members and businesses.

Many of us want to be partners in building smart, ethical frameworks that protect residents, uphold community trust, and support legitimate economic activity. We are not asking for the absence of regulation—we are asking for better regulation.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your willingness to engage with community voices on this issue.

"one bad apple doesn't spoil the whole bunch"

"we should all inherently believe that people are good, not bad"

Respectfully,

Paul Vega Jr.

Kansas City, Missouri

"For the People, by the People"

Phone: 816-665-5977

Address: 209 W 70th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64113

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