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## Fair and Honest

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**From** paulvegajr@protonmail.com <paulvegajr@protonmail.com>

**Date** Tue 1/13/2026 8:50 AM

**To** MG - City Communications <communications@kcmo.org>; Clerk <Clerk@KCMO.org>

**Cc** MayorQ <MayorQ@kcmo.org>; O'Neill, Kevin <Kevin.O'Neill@kcmo.org>; Radzevich, Diana <Diana.Radzevich@kcmo.org>; Willett, Nathan <Nathan.Willett@kcmo.org>; Williamson, Annie <Annie.Williamson@kcmo.org>; Minardi, Lisa <Lisa.Minardi@kcmo.org>; Rogers, Wes <Wes.Rogers@kcmo.org>; Justis, Amy <Amy.Justis@kcmo.org>; Yearwood, DJ <Darius.Yearwood@kcmo.org>; Robinson, Melissa <Melissa.Robinson@kcmo.org>; Ross, Lisa <Lisa.Ross@kcmo.org>; Magana, Araceli <Araceli.Magana@kcmo.org>; Bunch, Eric <Eric.Bunch@kcmo.org>; Iden, Marissa <Marissa.Iden@kcmo.org>; Berry, Rita <Rita.Berry@kcmo.org>; Parks-Shaw, Ryana <Ryana.Parks-Shaw@kcmo.org>; McCoy, Keema <Keema.McCoy@kcmo.org>; Foster, Katrina <Katrina.Foster@kcmo.org>; Santner, John <John.Santner@kcmo.org>; Manager <manager@kcmo.org>

 1 attachment (71 KB)

Fair and Honest.pdf;

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Hello,

I am reaching out to share my concerns and ongoing advocacy regarding an issue that affects not only Kansas City but also the broader state of Missouri. I believe this matter requires attention at both the state and federal levels, which is why I am hand-delivering my correspondence to all 34 offices of the Missouri Senate.

As a regular citizen striving to provide for my family, I have seen various federal bills that resonate with my stance. However, I am unsure of the best way to contact federal representatives to voice my concerns effectively. Currently, it seems that sending physical mail may be the most reliable option, but I would greatly appreciate any advice or resources you could provide to help me navigate this process more efficiently.

I intend to keep all relevant parties informed, including the city council and the state senate, as I believe collective awareness and action are vital in addressing this issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to any guidance you may offer.

Kind Regards,

Paul Vega Jr  
"For the People, by the People"  
816-665-5977

### **Document Attached**

Sent with [Proton Mail](https://protonmail.com) secure email.

Honorable Duly Elected Officials,

This effort began as opposition to Ordinance 251028, specifically the provisions relating to cannabis. As public awareness has grown, it has become increasingly clear that this issue extends far beyond a single ordinance or even a single city. What we are witnessing is a coordinated political and legal environment shaped not only by local interests, but by statewide and national influence from corporate, multi-state cannabis operators and their affiliated trade organizations.

As one individual—with a family, employees, and financial obligations—my personal reach is naturally limited. My advocacy is rooted in Kansas City and the State of Missouri. However, the implications of these policies reach far beyond any one person or jurisdiction. Many cannabis and hemp operators in Missouri are legitimate, responsible, tax-paying businesses that have no connection to the so-called “bad actors” often cited as justification for sweeping enforcement actions. These businesses operate with zero nuisance calls, strong compliance records, and genuine community ties, yet they risk being treated no differently than illicit operations.

We, the people, are asking lawmakers, regulators, law enforcement, and the judiciary to recognize this distinction and to carefully consider the unintended consequences of rash, blanket measures, including mass closures. We further call on Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) and the Judicial Branch to stand with the public in protecting community safety, economic stability, and lawful commerce.

There is no dispute that true bad actors exist—entities that operate as de facto street drug dealers, selling whatever is profitable without regard for safety, legality, or public health. These operations lack ethical standards and undermine the rule of law. However, conflating compliant cannabis and hemp businesses with these actors is not only inaccurate—it is dangerous.

Cannabis policy is clearly moving in a more rational direction nationwide. With cannabis now advancing toward a Schedule III classification, and with legalization beginning as early as 1996, the trajectory is unmistakable. As of 2026, 38 states have legalized cannabis in some form, and full federal legalization is no longer speculative—it is inevitable. Missouri's legislative bodies should act with foresight and restraint, enacting policies that retain

tax revenue within the state, protect small businesses, and target enforcement where it truly belongs.

Rather than punishing compliant operators, we propose reasonable, enforceable best practices for hemp-derived products, including:

- Strictly limiting sales to adults 21 and older with mandatory ID checks
- Sourcing products exclusively from U.S.-based producers
- Requiring written guarantees that products are Made in America
- Ensuring full compliance with state and federal testing, safety, potency, packaging, and labeling standards

These measures promote consumer safety without destroying livelihoods.

The immediate closure of good-standing businesses would have devastating statewide consequences. Many of

these operators are true small business owners—often owner-operated—who have invested their life savings into lawful enterprises. Sudden shutdowns would trigger bankruptcies, foreclosures, loan defaults, vacant storefronts, lost tax revenue, and family instability, with children ultimately bearing the cost.

Much of the pressure driving these extreme outcomes comes from the Missouri Cannabis Trade Association (MOCANN)—a well-funded trade PAC whose members generate millions annually, yet portray themselves as victims. This posture reflects not public interest, but unchecked greed and monopoly-driven ambition. MOCANN is part of a broader national network of trade groups backed by large, multi-state operators seeking vertical and horizontal integration across every legal market.

Missouri has already seen the consequences of this influence. The state's micro-dispensary program, intended to support disadvantaged applicants, has been marred by investigations, license revocations, predatory contracts, and alleged fraud. Reports have documented how well-connected individuals, out-of-state investors, and attorneys affiliated with MOCANN exploited loopholes to

seize control of licenses—undermining both equity and public trust.

Law enforcement voices deserve particular attention here. I have close family members and friends who currently serve, or have retired from service, in police and fire departments across Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas. Their perspective is consistent and clear: diverting consumers away from tax-paying cannabis businesses only strengthens the underground market.

The illicit cannabis market remains active, and street dealers are eager for policies that eliminate lawful competition. Shutting down compliant businesses drives demand directly back to illegal operators, placing more money into their hands. This directly contradicts the original purpose of legalization: to reduce criminal activity, eliminate the underground market, and enhance public safety.

Unlike street dealers, many large corporate operators have chosen to keep prices artificially aligned with the illicit market—not to eliminate it, but to maximize margins. Their current push for exclusivity and enforcement against smaller competitors exposes their true intent: monopoly, not public good. History shows that

monopolistic control of drug markets increases violence, homicides, and community harm.

My Uncle Mike Vega, a retired KCK Master Homicide Detective with an exceptional clearance record (featured on The First 48), and my Uncle Nick Vega, a retired KCK Senior Master Patrolman, are prepared to publicly support these conclusions. As retirees, they are now able to speak freely—something active officers are often prohibited from doing.

At a time when police departments like KCPD and SLMPD remain understaffed, redirecting limited law enforcement and judicial resources to advance the agenda of trade PACs and multi-state operators is indefensible from a public safety standpoint. The priority should be restoring full staffing, strengthening community-police relations, and combating the real threats facing Missouri today: narco-terrorism, cartel-driven trafficking, and the spread of fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and synthetic club drugs. These substances—not regulated cannabis—are the primary drivers of violent crime, overdose deaths, and community destabilization.

In closing, all who serve the State of Missouri should remember the enduring principle: "For the People, By the

People.” Missouri has the opportunity to demonstrate true democratic governance by protecting local autonomy, supporting small businesses and farmers, and crafting thoughtful, deliberate policy.

Any legislation or regulation that materially impacts lawful operators should include a minimum one-year implementation period, no earlier than November 12, 2026, to allow for transparent rule-making, economic impact analysis, and meaningful stakeholder input. This approach protects workers, families, landlords, and communities—and ensures that those driven by monopoly and consolidation can no longer hide their intentions.

Missouri can lead with reason, fairness, and courage. We simply ask that this matter be given the serious, careful consideration it deserves.

Kind Regards,

Paul Vega Jr

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