



August 1, 2019

The Honorable Charlie Baker  
Governor of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts State House  
24 Beacon St., Room 280  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker:

As a coalition of Massachusetts hemp farmers, processors, manufacturers, retailers and consumers we need your help. The June 12, 2019 Policy Statements issued by the Mass Dept of Agriculture and the Dept of Public Health regarding CBD and hemp derived products have thrown our nascent hemp industry into a state of great uncertainty. This is an alarming time for Massachusetts hemp farmers, over 100 of which are half way into the 2019 growing season and now fear that there will be no viable market for our crops. Likewise, small businesses that have invested in the hemp sector are currently floundering amidst prohibitive and ambiguous policies and uneven regulatory enforcement throughout the state, and consumers are unable to access products we have come to rely on.

These policy statements came within days of the House of Representatives voting, 152-0, to approve and send to the Senate a bill that would allow farmers with agricultural deed restrictions on their land to grow hemp. It would also qualify hemp farmers for the property tax breaks currently given to growers of other crops. This should be a major win for hemp farmers. However, as a result of the hemp statements issued by DPH and MDAR, farmers are unsure if there will be a 2020 growing season, let alone a reason to expand our operations onto APR and 61A land as we had hoped to do.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has developed a thriving cannabis sector despite federal prohibition of "marijuana." Massachusetts now has an opportunity to do the same for hemp. However, none of this can be achieved by generating new uncertainties or restrictions just as this market sector is emerging, or by denying consumers the hemp-derived products they have come to rely on. It is imperative that Massachusetts heeds the example of other states that have taken measures to support their growing hemp industry with laws that protect the intrastate commerce of hemp and hemp-derived products. Now that hemp is once again legal nationwide, it would be unwise for the Massachusetts's government to stand against the tide of



history, to limit the use of hemp-derived products to the detriment of farmers and small businesses, and against the Will of the People.

We need a safe and well-regulated hemp industry in Mass. Fortunately, there are rigorous safety testing protocols in place for hemp and hemp consumer products grown or produced in Massachusetts. These existing protocols provide robust consumer protection for hemp products *if applied to all hemp products sold in the state.*

We implore your administration to immediately halt any enforcement of the June 12, 2019 Policy Statements and to direct regulatory agencies to clarify that all parts of the hemp plant, including hemp-derived cannabinoids, are considered food and, as such, may be sold for human consumption or added to products, including those intended for human or animal consumption, and such an addition is not considered an adulteration of such products.

By supporting hemp farmers, processors, manufacturers, and retailers, Massachusetts can lead the way, while fostering economic growth, offering a lifeline to our struggling farming communities, and ensure consumer needs are met.

Sincerely,

The Northeast Sustainable Hemp Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia Agron".

Julia Agron, President

The Massachusetts Hemp Coalition

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Beohner".

Laura Beohner, Co-Founder

Northeast Organic Farming Association/Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA/Mass)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marty Dagoberto L. Driggs".

Marty Dagoberto L. Driggs, Policy Director