

Cannabis Regulation in B.C.

What We Heard

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

September 25 – November 1, 2017



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

*Cannabis Regulation in B.C.
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The Engagement Process

Between September 25 and November 1, 2017 the Cannabis Legalization and Regulation Secretariat (the Secretariat) and Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) conducted a public and stakeholder engagement initiative on behalf of the Province of British Columbia. The purpose of the engagement was to hear the views of British Columbians on a range of issues related to the legalization and regulation of non-medical cannabis in B.C.

This report represents the results of engagement activities undertaken during the noted time-frame. Several methods were used to solicit public input including an online feedback form (48,151 responses), a random telephone survey (800 participants) and the receipt of written submissions (141) from Local Governments, Indigenous Governments and Organizations, and stakeholder groups.

Engaging with Indigenous Governments and Organizations

The Province is committed to working closely with Indigenous peoples in preparation for the legalization of non-medical cannabis and engagement with Indigenous Governments and Organizations is ongoing and will continue as the Province develops its regulatory framework. Five Indigenous governments and one Indigenous organization provided written submissions during the engagement period.

Working with Local Governments

The Province is committed to working with Local Governments and has established the Joint Provincial-Local Government Committee on Cannabis Regulation. The committee provides a forum for communication and consultation with Local Governments as the Province develops the regulatory framework for legalized non-medical cannabis. Thirty-seven Local Governments and Regional Districts provided written submissions during the engagement period.

Background

In April 2017, the Government of Canada introduced two Bills in relation to the legalization of cannabis; Bill C-45 (the *Cannabis Act*) and Bill C-46 (amending the *Criminal Code* impaired driving provisions). The Bills are currently making their way through the federal parliamentary process with the goal of bringing Bill C-45 into force in July 2018, making non-medical cannabis legal in Canada as of that time. The federal government plans to bring into force the amendments related to drug-impaired driving as soon as Royal Assent is received.

While the federal government plans to regulate commercial production, provinces and territories will be responsible for many of the decisions about how non-medical cannabis is regulated in their jurisdictions including: distribution and retail systems; compliance and enforcement regimes; age limits; restrictions on possession, public consumption and personal cultivation; and amendments to road safety laws.

In B.C., the Honourable Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, has the mandate to lead the provincial government's planning for the safe implementation of legalized cannabis. The provincial government's goals of protecting young people, making health and safety a priority, keeping cannabis out of the hands of criminals, and keeping our roads safe are guiding this work. The Province is also committed to developing a made-in-B.C. regulatory framework that supports economic development throughout our province.

Online Feedback Form and Telephone Survey Findings

The Secretariat provided a discussion paper covering priority policy areas the Province is considering to help guide submissions, which included: minimum age, public possession and consumption, drug-impaired driving, personal cultivation, distribution and retail models.

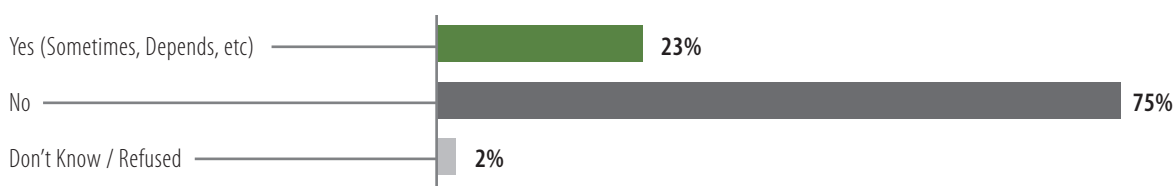
The discussion paper drew heavily from analysis of the federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation and identified policy options to consider in developing a B.C. regulatory framework for non-medical cannabis. The following information captures the feedback form and telephone survey results on those key policy areas.

Note: Due to rounding, telephone survey and feedback form results may not add up to 100%.

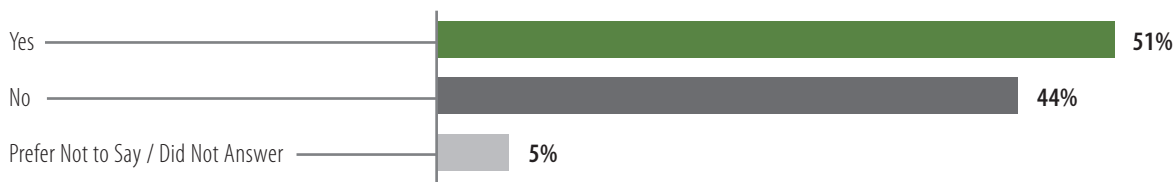
Cannabis Use

QUESTION:
Do you use cannabis?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS

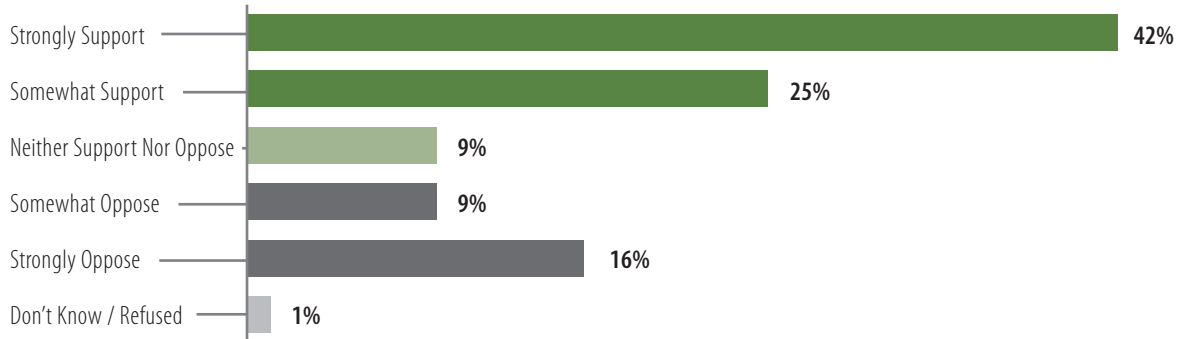


Support for Legalization

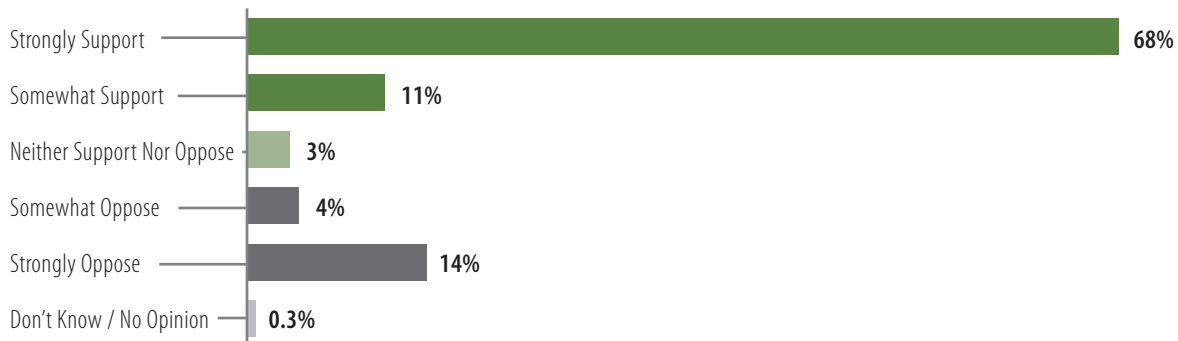
QUESTION:

Do you support legalization of cannabis?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS

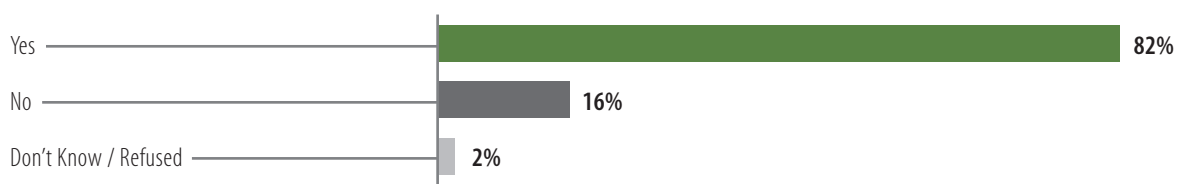


Minimum Age

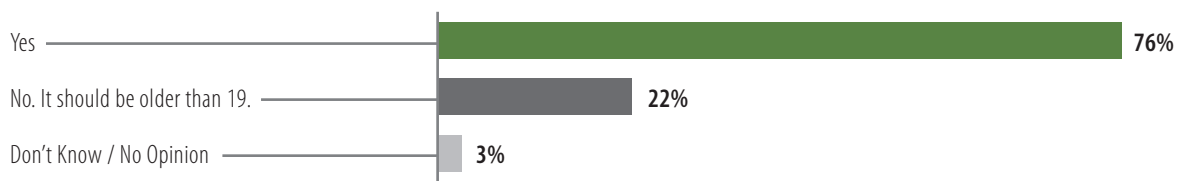
QUESTION:

Do you support setting the minimum age to possess, purchase, and consume cannabis in B.C. to 19?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Summary of Feedback Form Comments

Of those who provided additional comments, the majority said the minimum age should be higher than 19, with suggestions for the age to range from 21 to 25 years old. Many expressed concerns about how cannabis use can affect brain development in those under the age of 25 and suggested public education programs could be beneficial in helping adolescents understand the potential dangers associated with consuming cannabis at a young age. A minority commented that legal age should be lowered to 18, because they thought any other age will not deter young adults from experimenting or acquiring cannabis.

Written Submissions

The majority of submissions indicated support for setting the minimum age at 19, with respondents noting that setting the minimum at 19 aligns with the age of majority and legal age for consumption of alcohol and tobacco products in the province.

The Doctors of BC were among the stakeholders who recommended a minimum age older than 19 stating, "Doctors of BC recognizes that although it would be ideal to restrict all youth from accessing non-medical cannabis, the setting of a high minimum age will likely result in young cannabis users continuing to purchase unregulated cannabis in the illegal market. Weighing these concerns, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) recommends that the minimum age for purchasing nonmedical [sic] cannabis be set at 21 years of age."

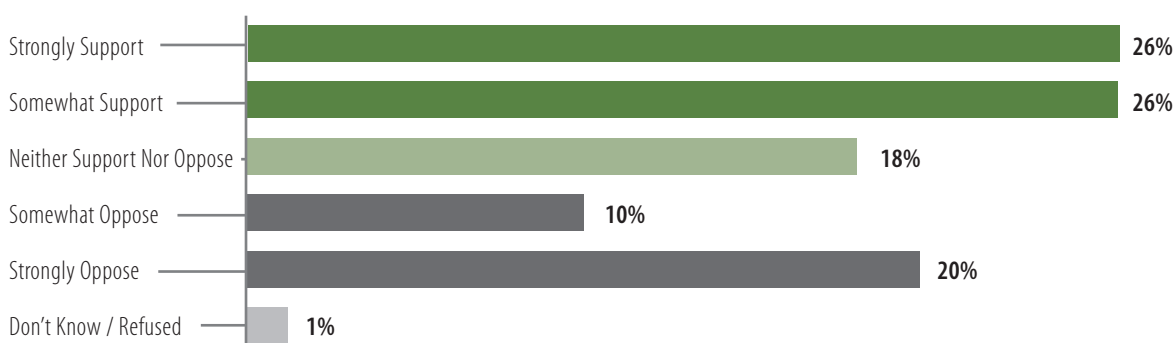
A number of written submissions expressed concerns about the effects of cannabis use in relation to proper brain development. There were also concerns that the younger a person starts using cannabis, the greater the risk for negative health and social outcomes. Many of those who commented advocated for public awareness initiatives to educate youth, young adults and parents about the potential impacts of cannabis use on the developing brain.

Personal Possession

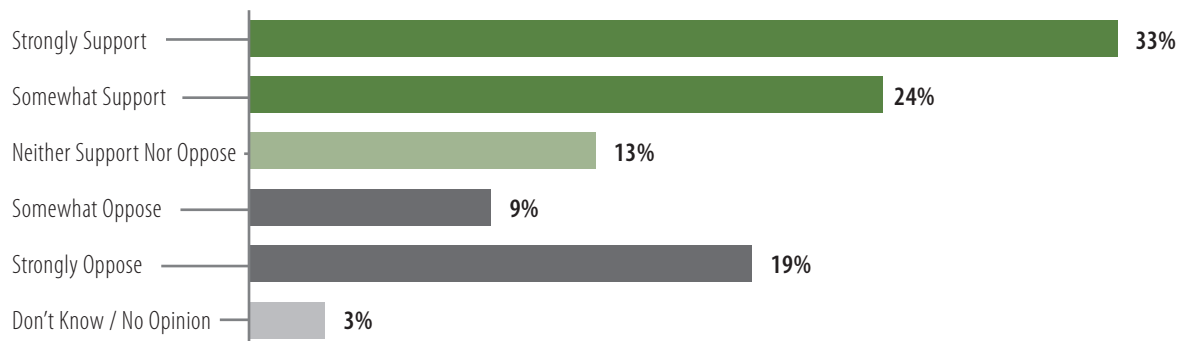
QUESTION:

Do you support the proposed federal 30 gram possession limit?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Summary of Feedback Form Comments

The majority of those who commented on the proposed federal 30 gram limit said it was too low. A number of these commenters said there should be no legal possession limit, similar to alcohol. Some people said they were concerned about the ability to enforce limitations on possession, or on users' willingness to adhere to such restrictions.

Those who indicated support for the proposed 30 gram possession limit said it is reasonable as it allows for an ounce to be carried with slight overage. Among those in support of possession limits, some suggested serious penalties should be reserved for those with large amounts in their possession.

Many who provided comments regarding personal possession limits and minors said those under 19 should not be allowed to possess any amount of cannabis and those found in possession should not be criminalized. Instead, similar to alcohol, a fine could be imposed.

Written Submissions

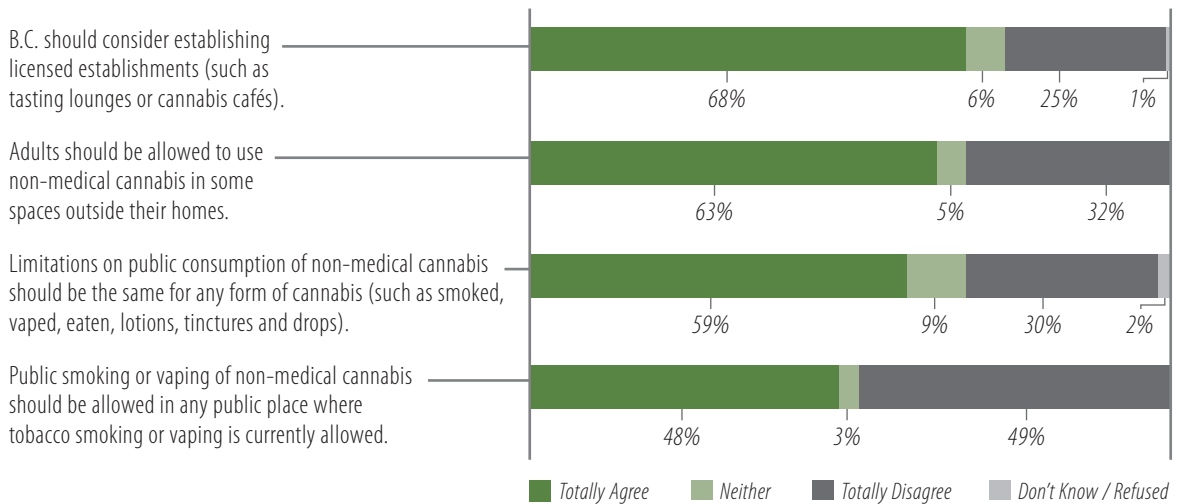
Written submission feedback on the topic of personal possession focused largely on youth possession, with a general consensus that cannabis possession by youth should not result in a criminal charge. A number of submissions called for the Province to prohibit possession by persons under the established provincial minimum age.

The B.C. Representative for Children and Youth recommended that "the enforcement of cannabis regulations should be treated similarly to current regulations related to tobacco and alcohol; and, the province should take steps to avoid the criminalization of youth." Child Health BC (CHBC) also supports treating youth cannabis possession of 5 grams or less similarly to tobacco or alcohol. However, CHBC believes "youth in possession of cannabis greater than 5 grams should continue to face criminal charges."

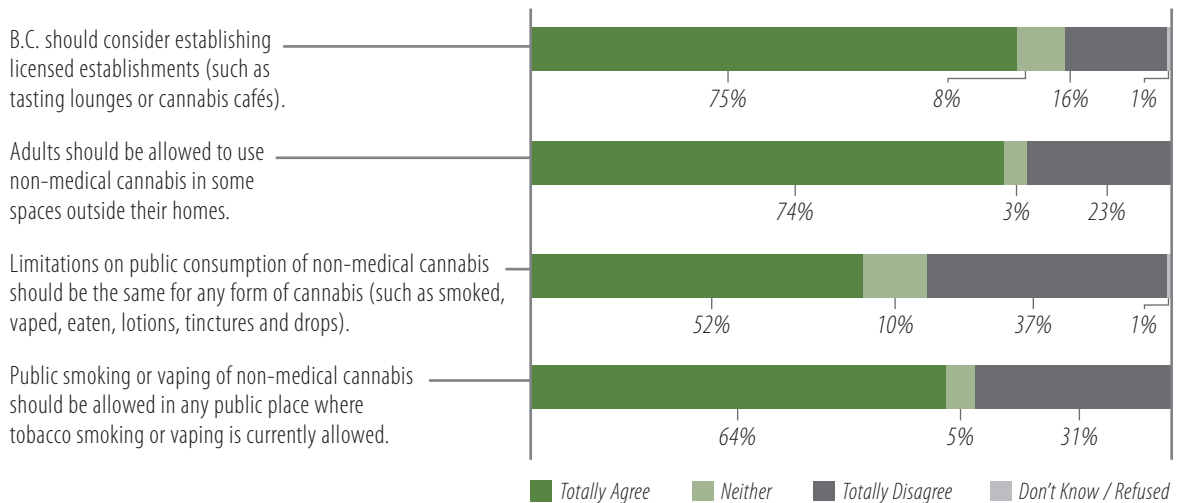
Comments around adult possession varied. A number expressed that imposing possession limits is unnecessary; while others believe establishing a limit is appropriate. The Village of Midway submission is representative of a number of submissions on this topic. The Village supports the proposed 30 gram limit established in federal Bill C-45 "as a way to help law enforcement professionals distinguish between cannabis intended for personal use and illegal possession intended for the purpose of trafficking."

Public Consumption

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Summary of Feedback Form Comments

Two significant points of view emerged from the comments on public consumption: those who do not want to be subjected to second-hand cannabis smoke in public spaces, and those who thought cannabis consumption should be limited to indoor use at a private residence and/or a designated consumption space (similar to alcohol).

Some said cannabis consumption should be treated the same as tobacco. However, others suggested cannabis consumption should not be regulated as heavily as tobacco because cannabis smoking and vaping is less frequent, resulting in less second-hand smoke. Many advocated limiting consumption to use in private residences. Some thought that allowing consumption in common areas and on balconies would affect their quality of life as smoke can easily travel through windows, doors and air intakes.

A number thought smoking should be prohibited in public spaces including: national and provincial parks, beaches, ski hills and trails. Conversely, some thought consumption in these public places should not be over-regulated and designated cannabis smoking areas should be considered. When considering children and youth, many opposed any type of consumption near places where children typically attend, including: daycares, elementary and secondary schools, community centres, etc.

Many comments about public consumption expressed support for the establishment of licensed cannabis cafés/lounges. Those supporting these establishments thought they would offer a safe, friendly and comfortable environment without disrupting others.

Written Submissions

Many submissions from organizations indicated they would like to see restrictions on smoking/vaping of cannabis products mirror those of current smoking/vaping laws. The majority of submissions who expressed concern about public consumption commented that smoking and vaping cannabis should be prohibited in places such as public parks, outdoor restaurant/bar patios and in or around schools, daycares and playgrounds. The Canadian Cancer Society's recommendation aligned with this view: "BC's Tobacco and Vapor Products Control Act should be amended to address smoking and vaping tobacco, cannabis, and all substances should be prohibited at parks, playgrounds, trails, plazas, beaches, recreation facilities and venues, workplaces and on restaurant and bar patios." Other respondents were in favour of a complete ban on any public consumption. Some commented that Local Governments should be able to prohibit consumption of cannabis through bylaws and restrict consumption to designated areas such as lounges. A number of submissions expressed support for the establishment of properly licensed cannabis cafés/lounges and did not support the sale of alcohol in these places.

Drug-Impaired Driving

B.C. must carefully look at strategies to deter drug-impaired driving to keep the public safe. Currently, there are two kinds of penalties, or sanctions, for drugs and driving. Under federal law, if police believe a driver's ability to operate a vehicle is impaired by a drug they may pursue criminal impaired driving charges. Under provincial law, if police believe a driver's driving ability is affected by a drug, other than alcohol, they may serve an administrative 24-hour driving prohibition at the roadside and impound the vehicle for that same period – in conjunction with or instead of criminal impaired driving charges.

The proposed federal Bill C-46 would establish new laws and tools under the *Criminal Code* to help police detect and investigate drug-impaired driving cases. Penalties would depend on the level of THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol is the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis) in blood and the presence of alcohol or another drug in addition to cannabis at or above set levels. The penalties range from a fine to a maximum penalty of 10 years in jail (doubling the current maximum of 5 years).

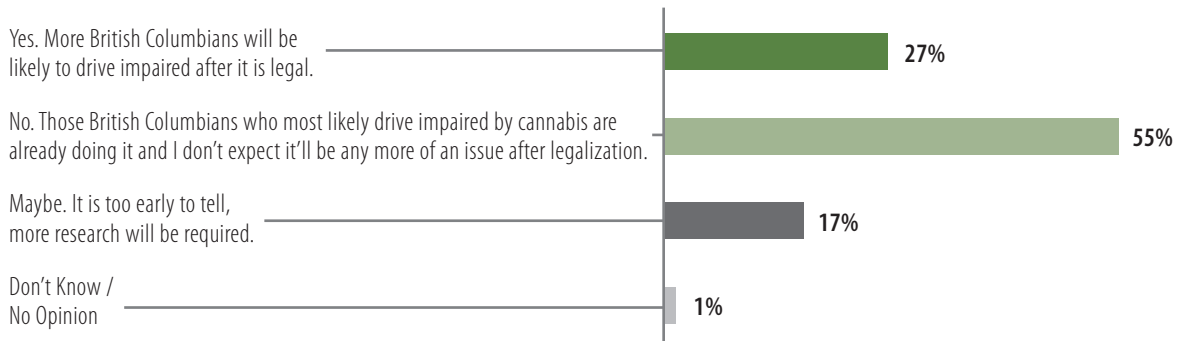
QUESTION:

Do you think the legalization of non-medical cannabis will result in increased problems with cannabis-impaired driving in B.C.?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

This question was not asked in the telephone survey.

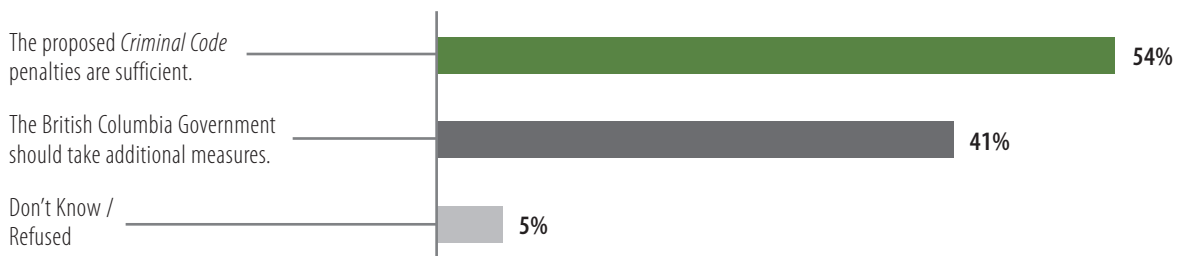
FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



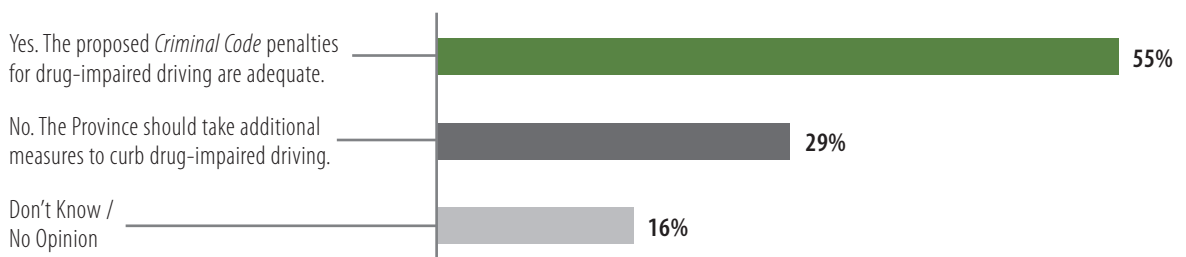
QUESTION:

Do you think the proposed *Criminal Code* penalties for drug-impaired driving are sufficient, or should B.C. consider additional actions to deter drug-impaired driving?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



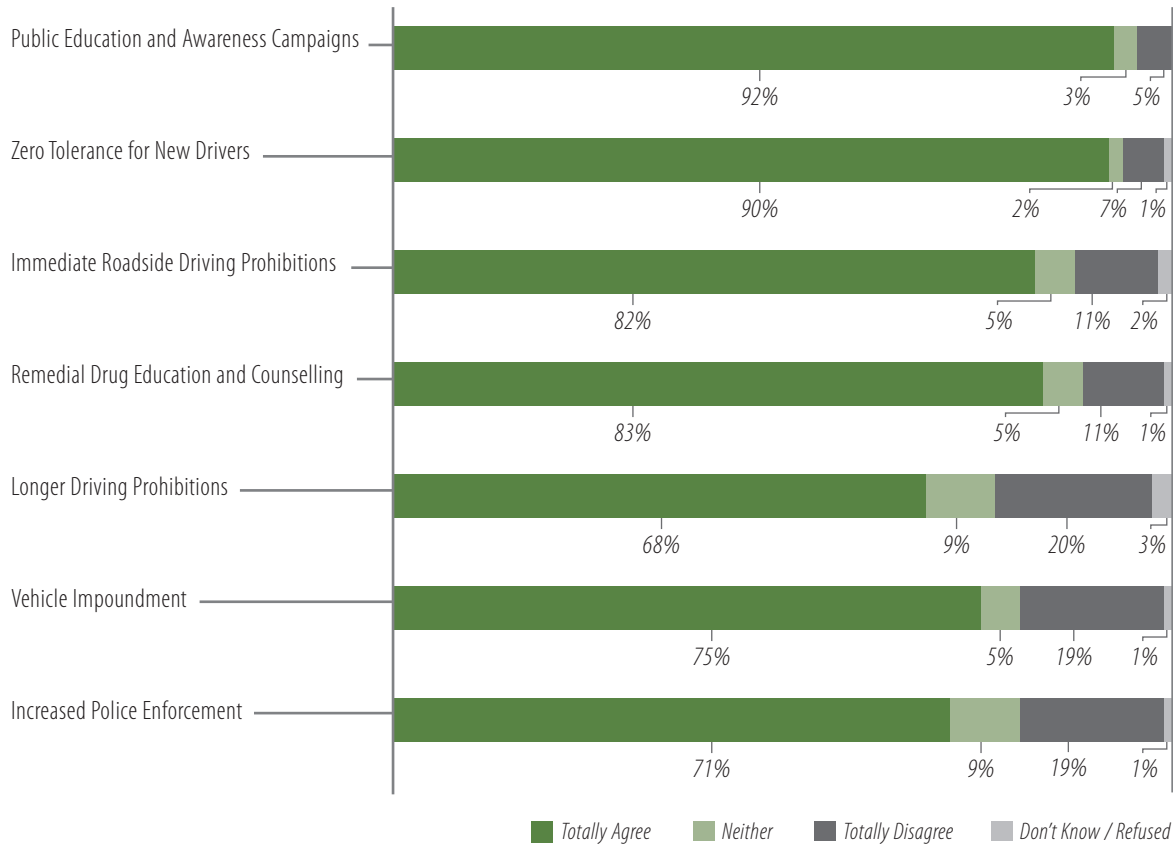
FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



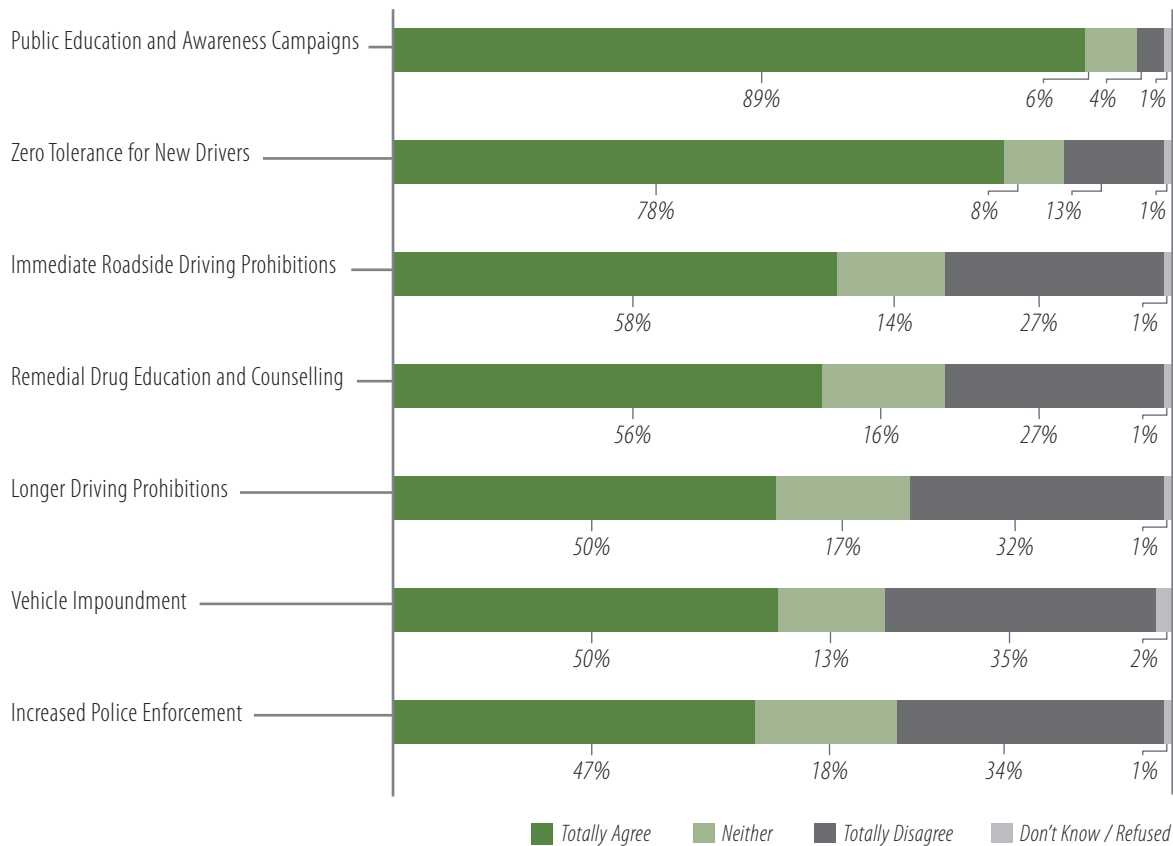
QUESTION:

What is your level of agreement for the following actions to reduce drug-impaired driving?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Summary of Feedback Form Comments

Comments on drug-impaired driving reflect polarized views. Some respondents advocated for zero tolerance for driving while affected by cannabis, while others suggested cannabis consumption doesn't cause impairment. Opposing views were also evident on the detection and testing for drug-related impairment. Some said there is no adequate testing to determine drug-related impairment. A number of respondents said police and RCMP need to be trained in detection and testing of drug-impaired driving, and that new funding will be required for that training. Some mentioned police training will need to include information on establishing levels of impairment and intoxication, or said it will be important for police to have the proper forensic tools to adequately measure impairment while others said police already have the necessary training and do not need additional tools for detecting cannabis.

Written Submissions

A significant number of written submissions received by the Secretariat addressed the topic of drug-impaired driving. Although feedback varied to some extent, two priority items stood out as key recommendations: the need for a provincial public education campaign to deter drug-impaired driving and appropriate training for police forces.

Many submissions highlighted the need for further research into the issue of cannabis-impaired driving and encouraged B.C. to consider additional actions to deter drug-impaired driving beyond the proposed federal *Criminal Code* penalties.

Views expressed by the BC Coalition of Nursing Associations (BCCNA) were representative of a number of submissions on this policy issue. BCCNA said: "B.C. should expand the Immediate Roadside Prohibition (IRP) and/or the Administrative Driving Prohibition (ADP) to include drug impaired driving" and "greater investment in Standard Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) and Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training among police officers across the province in order to better assess impairment."

The specific issue of youth drug-impaired driving was raised, with a number of submissions encouraging a zero-tolerance policy for 'New' and 'Learner' drivers. Child Health BC recommended "a zero-tolerance approach for cannabis use among young drivers, regardless of impairment levels for adults."

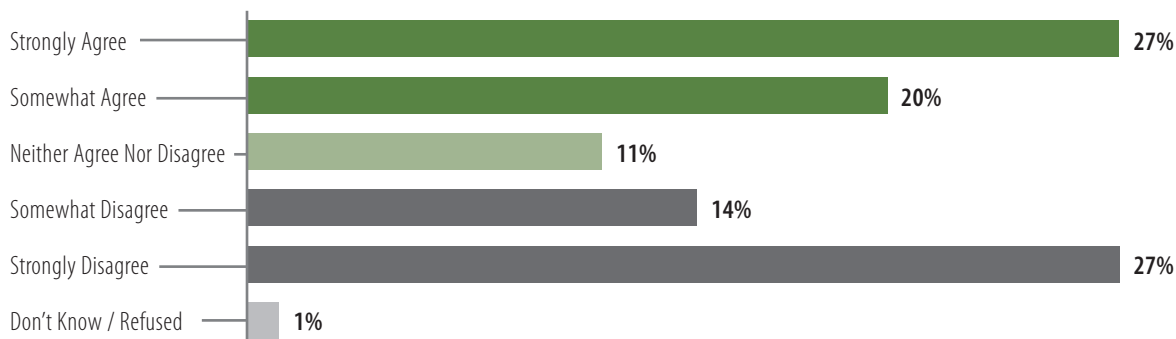
The BC Trucking Association stressed the need for B.C. to work collaboratively with other jurisdictions, stating that "provincial and federal cooperation is imperative to ensure that the regulatory framework is robust, clear, fair, and that it protects all road users."

Personal Cultivation

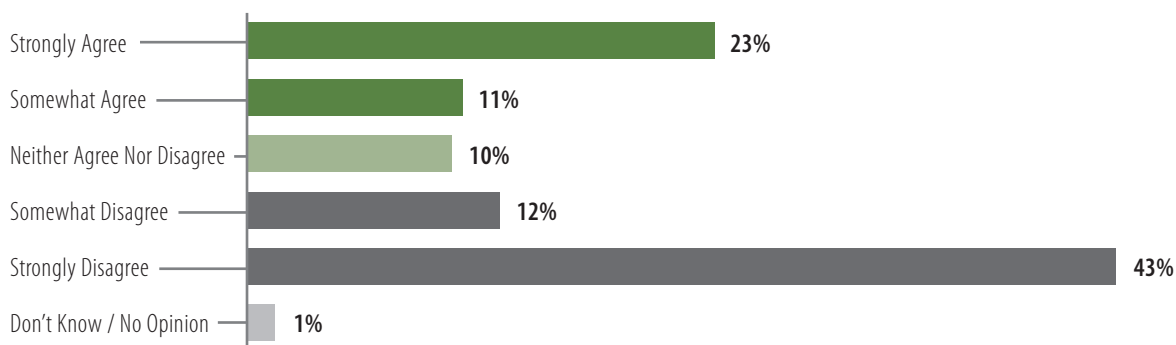
QUESTION:

What is your level of agreement with the following statement: B.C. should set additional restrictions on where and how British Columbians can grow non-medical cannabis for personal use at home.

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Summary of Feedback Form Comments

Overall, comments regarding personal cultivation supported permitting personal cultivation, but with a range of views on proposed restrictions regarding indoor vs. outdoor cultivation, the number of plants per household and the limits on plant height. Some respondents were of the view that the fewer restrictions on personal cultivation the better. Numerous responses suggested the proposed federal limits were too restrictive. Some questioned the need to register in order to grow cannabis at home drawing a parallel to making wine and beer or growing tobacco at home.

Many of these comments referenced the challenge of policing home cultivation. A number of participants expressed strong opposition to personal cultivation and some cited opposition by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police who stated they strongly oppose in-home production and any provisions related to personal cultivation in their written brief to the federal Standing Committee on Health.

Those who expressed concern said personal cultivation would increase the access of children and youth to cannabis, and called for restrictions on homes with underage children. Others said excess home cultivation product would end up being sold on the illegal market. Some questioned the need for personal cultivation given the many other options to obtain cannabis.

Issues were raised around the impact personal cultivation would have on house values, property insurance and tenants' rights. Many called for requirements to disclose that a home had been used to cultivate cannabis at the time of sale. Others called for landlords to have rights to restrict or ban cultivation in apartments and condos. Many comments cited issues around noxious odour, moisture and mold, and potential fire hazards from home cultivation, particularly in apartment buildings and condos.

Written Submissions

A number of written submissions regarding personal cultivation want home cultivation of cannabis prohibited in multi-unit dwellings, while others said that the proposed limits as set out in the *Cannabis Act* were sufficient.

Among those who responded in favour of prohibition, submissions cited a number of concerns to support this recommendation including: high humidity and temperatures, risk of fire, electrical overloading hazards, use of hazardous chemicals such as pesticides, potential for damage to the property, possible liability for the landlord and risk to the tenant(s) and mortgage holder, organized crime concerns, growth of mould, strong odours and potential for children and underage youth to access cannabis in the home.

The BC Association of Municipal Chiefs of Police "echoes the sentiment of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police in its opposition to in-home production" and cited concerns about risk of youth exposure and access, potential contamination in homes, and increased liability and enforcement pressure on police.

LandlordBC was also among the stakeholders in favour of prohibition in multi-unit dwellings. "LandlordBC urges the BC government to prohibit all marijuana growing in multi-unit dwellings, and in rented dwellings of any form or size (including outer buildings and in open air gardens)."

The British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA) expressed concerns about "the dangers posed by properties used in the production of drugs, including cannabis..." and recommended that the Province develop a centralized, consistent process for disclosure of property history information.

Conversely, other submissions spoke in support of the federal government's proposal to allow personal cultivation of up to four plants per residence with no additional restrictions. Among those in favour of this limit, some stakeholders commented that Local Governments should be given the authority to prohibit or regulate home cultivation through zoning and building bylaws.

Several submissions suggested that if the retail regime is convenient and affordable, personal cultivation may be less desirable. The Rural Agency Store Advisory Society said their "group, as a whole, does not want to see a black market in our, or anyone else's, neighborhood and do agree that most consumers will not take the time and effort needed to cultivate marijuana if there is a convenient and affordable retail option."

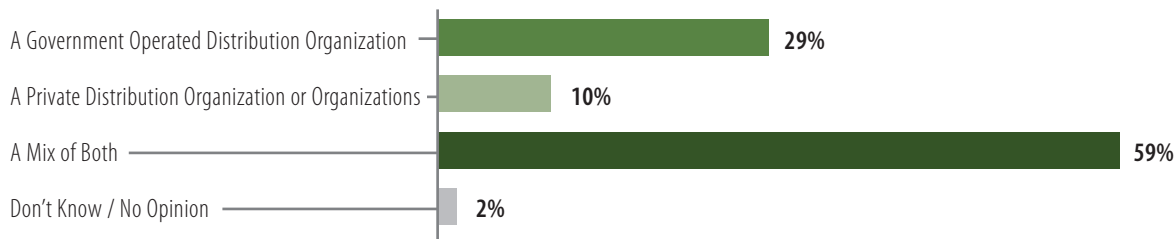
The Canadian Alliance for Responsible Cannabis Production said: “Further restrictions on the 4-plant limit proposed under C-45 is not warranted. As with tobacco or alcohol, while regulation may allow a home micro-scale production, the costs and inconvenience will not be worthwhile; provided of course, that an efficient legal market is allowed to operate.”

Distribution

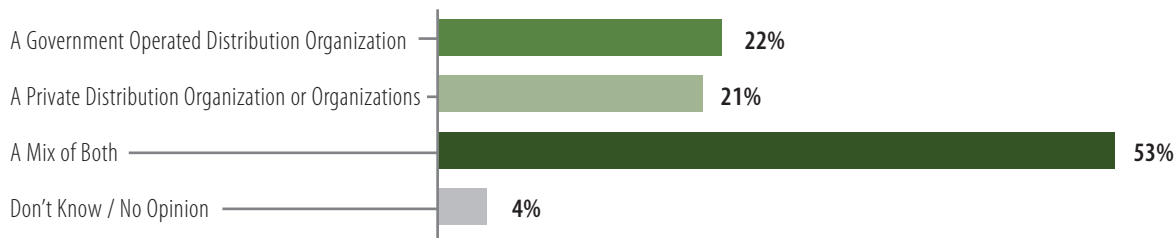
QUESTION:

Who should be responsible for distribution of non-medical cannabis products?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Summary of Feedback Form Comments

The majority of those who commented on distribution appear to have confused distribution with retail. Some thought that distributors should have licenses. A slim majority favoured government-run distribution; many saying government should fold cannabis distribution into the current liquor distribution system. Others said government should base it on the liquor distribution system because the existing system is reliable and tested.

The majority of the remaining comments said they'd like to see distribution left to the private industry. Many explicitly opposed the model Ontario has chosen for distribution and retail. Most of these individuals preferred to see the existing dispensaries and their supply chain legitimized, licensed and regulated. A few were simply opposed to government involvement in distribution, regardless of the shape it takes. Most did not specifically oppose government distribution, but rather saw the current dispensaries as meeting the needs of the market, a good opportunity for small businesses, and a way to keep cannabis “in the hands of people who know the product best.”

There were very few comments about warehousing and distribution practices or standards. Many of those who did comment said that there should be regular inspections and product testing at warehouses/distribution hubs. Only a few touched on how cannabis distributors should transport product.

Written Submissions

A number of stakeholder submissions combined their recommendations on retail and distribution models, with an overarching focus on retail. Several respondents commented that the Province should make use of the current liquor distribution and retail system as opposed to creating something new for non-medical cannabis.

Respondents, such as the Responsible Marijuana Retail Alliance of BC, highlighted the reliability and track record of the current liquor distribution system to responsibly distribute a controlled substance: "Our provincial liquor systems have nearly a century of experience controlling the distribution of a controlled substance. Adding marijuana to the mandate means the established control infrastructure can manage the most problematic features of cannabis consumption that were rooted in illegal trade and focus on introducing it as a managed and controlled product in Canada."

When considering a public distribution model, submissions from the Ucluelet First Nation and Lake Cowichan First Nation suggested the Province "implement a rule that a minimum percentage of products available are from First Nations cultivators."

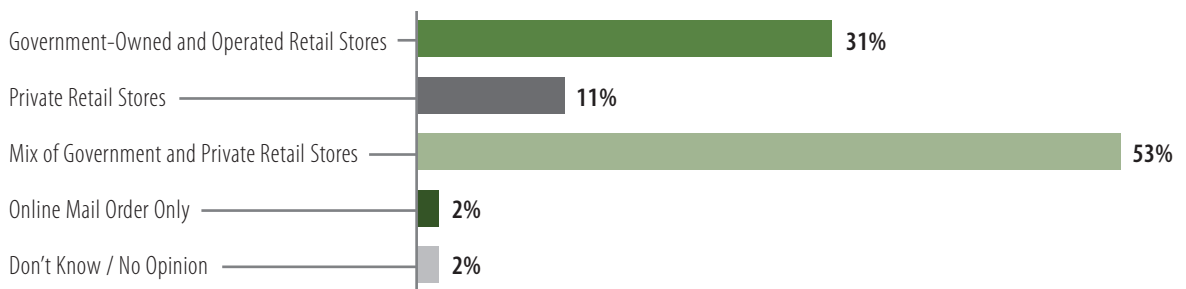
Some stakeholders supported licensed producers distributing directly to retailers. Respondents mentioned this model would cut down on shipping and transportation costs for those in smaller and/or rural communities and would allow for market competition. Several respondents encouraged private distribution noting that this model will allow experienced, safe and well-governed companies to compete for demand in the non-medical cannabis market. A number of respondents commented that the centralized warehousing of fresh cannabis should be avoided.

Retail

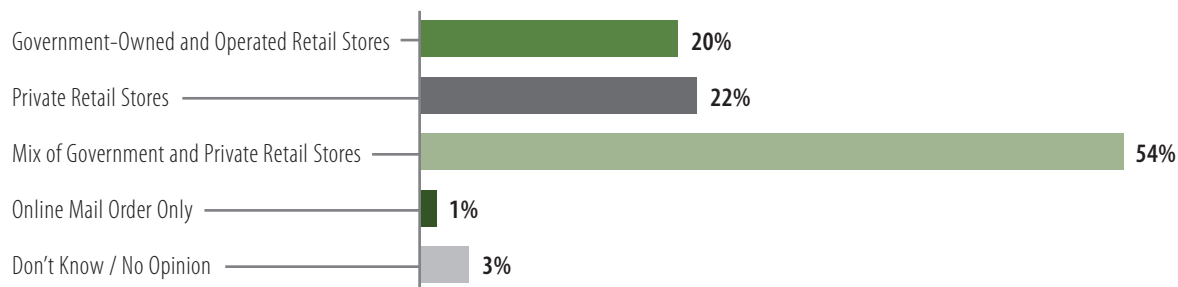
QUESTION:

Where should non-medical cannabis be sold?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



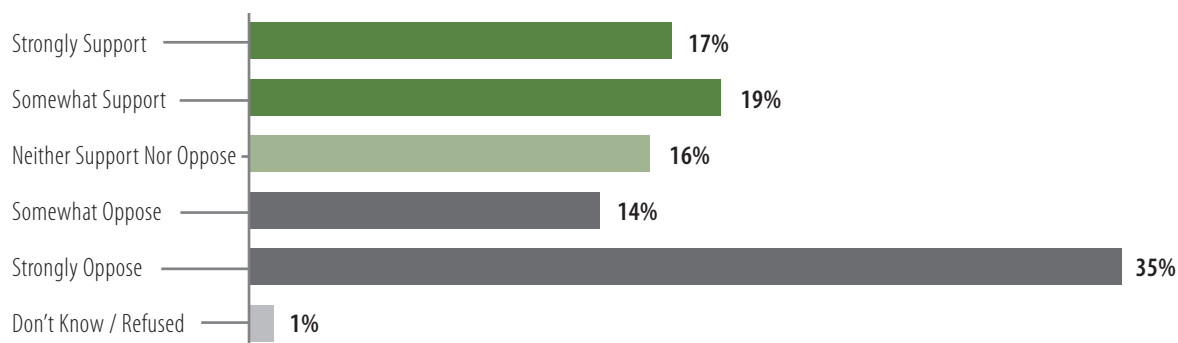
FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



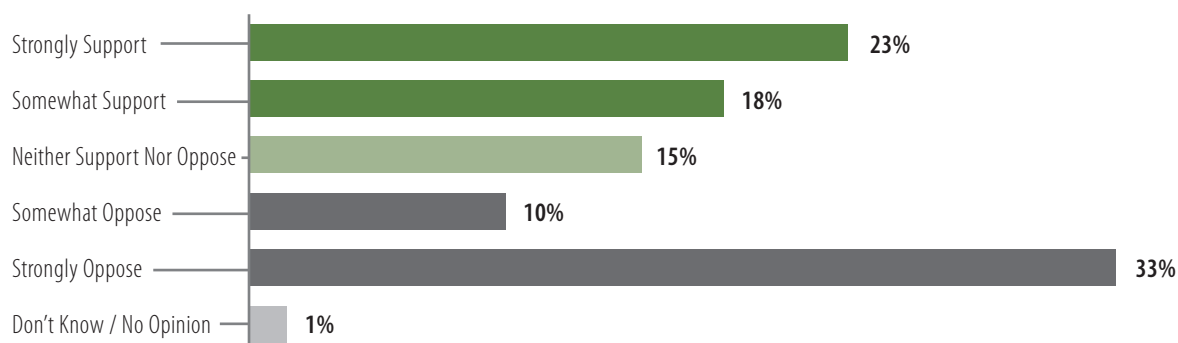
QUESTION:

Do you support selling non-medical cannabis in liquor stores?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



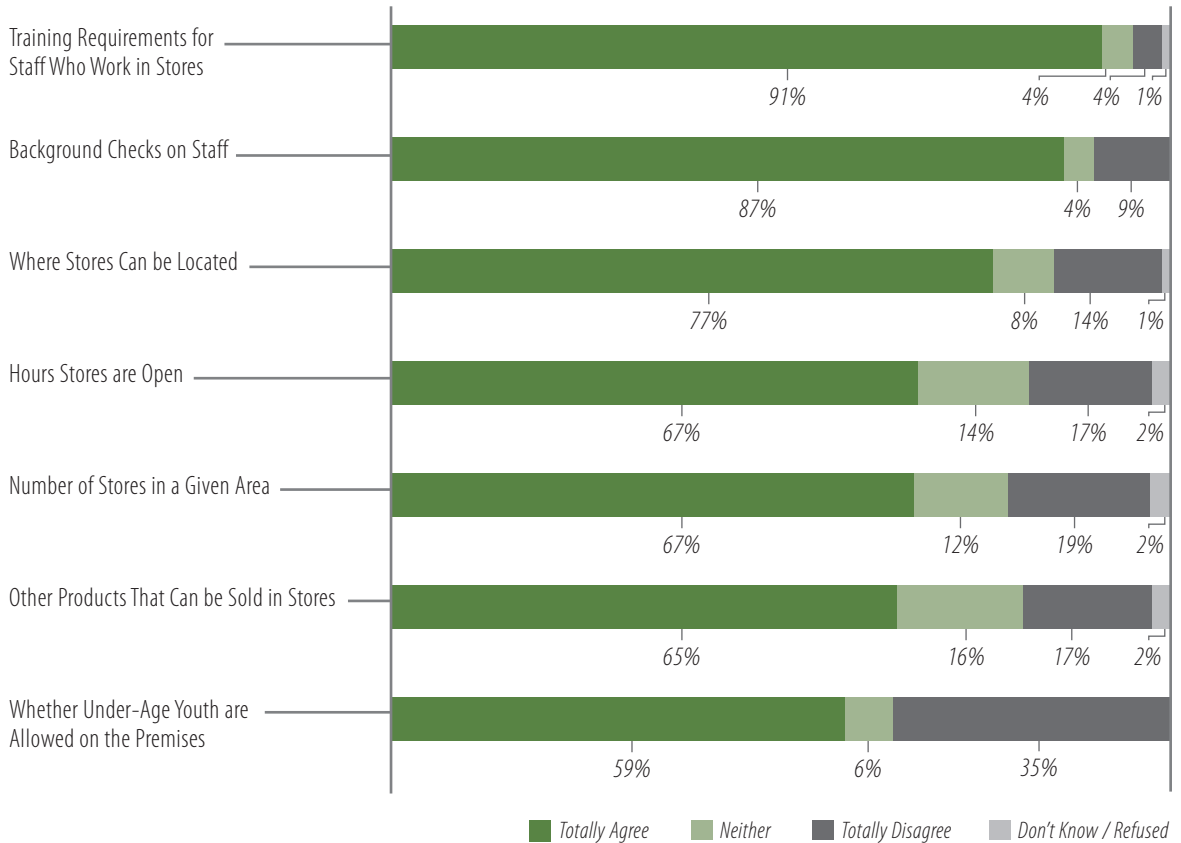
FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



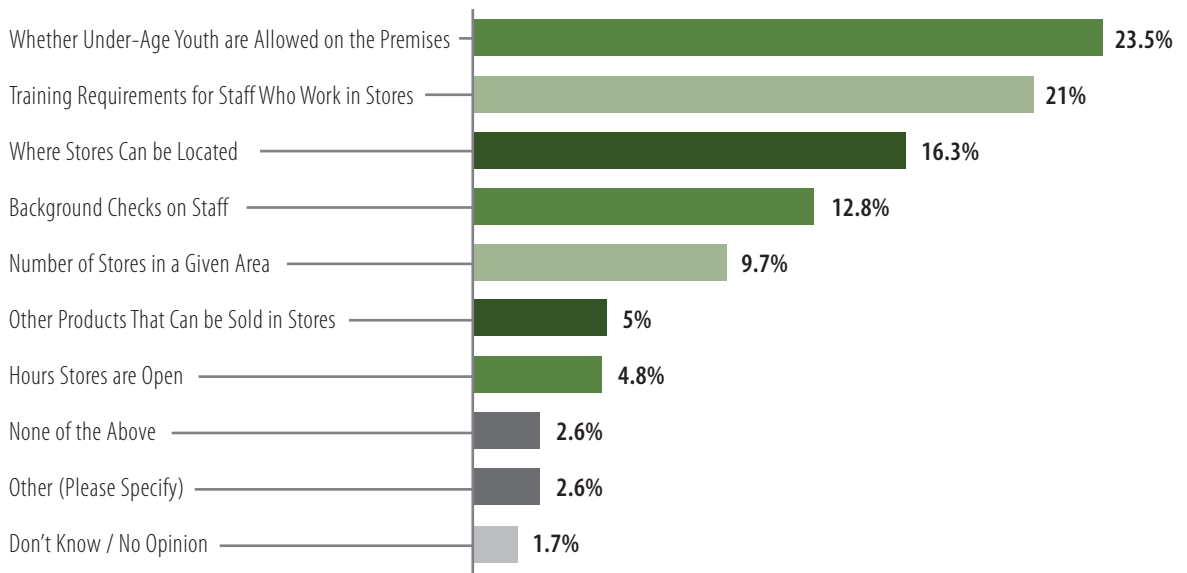
QUESTION:

If sold in retail stores, which requirements should be considered for regulating retail regardless of who operates the store?

TELEPHONE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



FEEDBACK FORM RESPONDENTS



Note: Feedback form respondents were asked to provide their top three choices, telephone survey participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement on all.

Summary of Feedback Form Comments

The majority of online comments indicated support for private stores. For most, that meant keeping the existing dispensaries. They see the dispensaries as knowledgeable and customer-friendly businesses that are currently meeting all of their needs. Others said that too much government regulation would ruin the market that currently exists. A few were simply opposed to a government-only retail model. Only a small number of those who provided additional comments were of the opinion that government should shut the dispensaries down; they were opposed to the idea of legitimizing businesses that have been breaking the law.

A smaller number indicated support for cannabis sales in government-run storefronts. For the most part, they saw government-run stores as the best way to ensure rules and regulations are enforced and to combat the illegal market. A number of commenters said liquor stores would be a suitable place to sell cannabis, given their experience handling a controlled substance.

Comments about pharmacies selling cannabis were varied and ranged from full support to total opposition. Those in support viewed pharmacies as a suitably controlled environment in which to sell a regulated product; those opposed were concerned about pharmacies being too restrictive.

Those who advocated in favour of small business retail over large commercial retailers, indicated opportunities should be created for small businesses to enter the new legal market. These commenters indicated the local, small business culture of the current dispensaries was the best environment in which to make a purchase.

Very few comments supported a completely free market for retail licensing. Some suggested support for having licensed retailers (who would need to meet criteria in order to operate), but there was a significant discrepancy around what those requirements should be. A number thought that dispensaries deserve to receive a license to continue operating. Only a small number opposed private retail stores, or said that dispensaries should be excluded from the market. A number suggested folding cannabis sales into the Province's existing liquor distribution and retail system would eliminate the need for a brand new licensing scheme.

A notable number of comments favoured establishing dedicated inspectors instead of relying on police to enforce retail license conditions.

Written Submissions

Written responses on the topic of retail varied. Submissions showed there is some level of support for all retail options outlined in the discussion paper. Comments in support of a private retail system, or mix of public and private, provided a number of reasons, including B.C.'s positive experience with private sector liquor retail and the need for private retail to compete with the illegal market.

An excerpt from the BC Alliance for Healthy Living's submission provides a good representation of those in support of a public only retail system: "From alcohol retail studies, we know that sales in government controlled outlets (government monopolies) result in fewer sales to minors, reduced intoxication and more opportunities to apply minimum pricing and other measures to promote a culture of moderation."

Regarding co-location of cannabis and alcohol, written submissions were divided. The most common reason provided from those opposing co-location was potential negative impact to public health. The BC Government and Service Employees Union (BCGEU) provided the following reasoning in support of co-location, “Other controlled substances are already co-located in retail stores. For example, grocery stores across B.C. sell both cigarettes and painkillers, and several now sell wine as well.” The BCGEU also mentioned that the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has stated that “there is no evidence as to whether selling cannabis and alcohol alongside one another encourages or facilitates co-use.”

Several respondents commented that mail delivery should remain an option and some support the option of retail through pharmacies.

Summaries of Participant Comments: Other Topics

The online feedback form posed a number of questions aimed at obtaining opinions on key policy areas for B.C. related to cannabis legalization and regulation. The feedback form also provided an opportunity for respondents to share additional written comments on the topic of cannabis regulation. The following is a brief summary of additional themes that emerged from feedback form participant comments.

Economic Development

The majority of comments regarding economic development reflected a strong interest in various aspects of cannabis production, sale and licensing and the potential for economic development. Many comments regarding economic development expressed the desire for the Province to capitalize on its existing reputation in relation to cannabis. The benefits of cannabis-related tourism were mentioned frequently.

Many stressed the importance of creating opportunities for small businesses. Some called for licensing of cannabis ventures as a way of increasing tourism and encouraging small craft producers. The current economic benefits to small communities was mentioned often, as was the idea that independent producers help eliminate the illegal market. Comments indicated allowing current small growers to become legal businesses, pay taxes and contribute openly in their communities would be very beneficial to local economies.

Edibles

Although cannabis concentrates and edibles containing cannabis will not be authorized for retail sale immediately upon legalization, a significant number of commenters provided feedback regarding these cannabis-related products. The federal government recently amended Bill C-45 to authorize cannabis concentrates and edibles containing cannabis for retail sale no more than 12 months after the date the *Cannabis Act* comes into force.

Opinions regarding edibles ranged from those extremely supportive to those who were opposed. The main themes that emerged were the need for regulation, safety, packaging, and enforcement of edibles containing cannabis.

Medical Cannabis

Although the federal government has decided to maintain a separate system for medical cannabis, many comments discussed cannabis for medical use, mostly focusing on clarifying medical vs. non-medical use, distribution, senior citizen use, and medical coverage. Some comments regarding cannabis for medical reasons expressed a need to fully separate medical cannabis from non-medical cannabis.

Opinions varied regarding how medical cannabis should be distributed, with some stating that cannabis for medical use should be strictly regulated by the government and sold only in pharmacies but not dispensaries. Many mentioned they think insurance should cover the cost of medical cannabis to treat certain illnesses. Some commenters encouraged government to consider setting up medical cannabis tax subsidies and tax incentives to ensure medical producers don't abandon medical cannabis production in favour of non-medical cannabis.

Production

The majority of comments expressed strong support for the concept of craft cannabis, a model that supports small scale growers and producers, and licenses smaller craft producers similar to craft breweries, small craft distilleries, and small vineyards. Some suggested a certification process similar to that of the BC VQA for wine to encourage small and medium-sized cannabis producers to participate. Some commented cannabis could be a good crop to help reinvigorate small farms and homesteads. Many comments on this topic wanted to see an accountable provincial body established to oversee the quality, training, and adherence to standards, and to be clear about what happens if those standards are not met.

Public Education and Advertising

The majority of those commenting on public education highlighted the importance of educating children and youth, while many others emphasized the importance of broad-reaching cannabis public education campaigns across the entire population. The majority of comments on advertising suggested advertising regulations for cannabis should be similar to those in place for alcohol and tobacco. Placement of advertising was mentioned frequently with many saying cannabis advertising should only target adults and only be placed in areas accessible by adults. Some respondents said packaging should not be enticing, nor should displays be attractive. Some highlighted the importance of packaging labels including information about THC content and health risk warnings similar to alcohol and tobacco products.

Public Health

Comments regarding public health expressed opposing viewpoints about whether cannabis is harmful to health and if it is addictive. Some suggested cannabis can be used to help people transition away from addiction to alcohol or stronger drugs like heroin. Comments about addictive properties of cannabis were also contrasting; some suggested it is not addictive, while others differed. Several comments suggested cannabis can be used to treat pain instead of opioids.

Revenue and Taxation

Comments on level of taxation ranged from suggesting cannabis should be taxed at a high rate, like tobacco and alcohol, to comments advocating for minimal taxation. Those who advocated for higher rates commented that taxation at too low a rate would cause government to lose out on tax revenue. Those who encouraged a lower level of taxation said a high rate of tax could drive buyers into the illegal market and suggested a reasonable level of taxation would help extinguish the illegal market. Some commented that medical cannabis should be taxed at a lower level, just like prescription drugs.

In terms of what the tax revenue could be used for, some said they want to see revenue shared between federal, provincial and municipal governments, while others advocated for revenue going only to the province and/or the municipality.

The majority of comments about how tax revenue should be used suggested these funds should be invested in public education, particularly youth education, and the health care system, including cancer research and treating chronic illnesses. Many commented that revenue should be used to address the policing and enforcement costs associated with legalization, including training and screening devices.

Workplace Safety

Workplace safety was a key concern for a large number of respondents, and many said cannabis use should not be permitted at any worksite, or in conjunction with the operation of any motorized transportation. Others were concerned about a perceived inability to discipline an impaired employee, which would result in an unsafe workplace. Many expressed a strong opposition to impaired operation of any type of potentially dangerous equipment. Many were of the view that businesses need further support related to drug testing of employees, treatment programs, and guidance on zero tolerance for impairment at work.

Next Steps

Information updates about cannabis regulation in B.C. will be posted to:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/cannabis>

Federal updates on legalization and regulation are available at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/justice/legalization-regulation-marijuana.html>

Appendix

List of Groups and Organizations That Made Submissions

A. G. Kemp & Associates Inc.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/A.-G.-Kemp-Associates-Inc..pdf

Abbotsford School District

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Abbotsford-School-District.pdf

Alliance of Beverage Licensees (ABLE BC)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Alliance-of-Beverage-Licensees-ABLE-BC.pdf

Alternative Aromatic Apothecary

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Alternative-Aromatic-Apothecary.pdf

Amercanex International Exchange

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Amercanex-International-Exchange.pdf

Archdiocese of Vancouver

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Archdiocese-of-Vancouver.pdf

Arthritis Society and Canadians for Fair Access to Medical Marijuana

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Arthritis-Society-and-Canadians-for-Fair-Access-to-Medical-Marijuana.pdf

Aura Cannabis

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Aura-Cannabis.pdf

Aurora Cannabis

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Aurora-Cannabis.pdf

Baked Edibles Inc.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Baked-Edibles-Inc..pdf

BC Alliance for Healthy Living

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/BC-Alliance-for-Healthy-Living.pdf

BC Coalition of Nursing Associations

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/BC-Coalition-of-Nursing-Association's.pdf

BC Compassion Club Society

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/BC-Compassion-Club-Society.pdf

BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/BC-Government-and-Service-Employees'-Union-BCGEU.pdf

BC Independent Cannabis Association

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/BC-Independent-Cannabis-Association.pdf

BC Pharmacy Association

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/BC-Pharmacy-Association.pdf

BC Real Estate Association

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/BC-Real-Estate-Association-Oct-18.pdf

BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/BC-School-Trustees-Association-BCSTA.pdf

BC Trucking Association

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/BC-Trucking-Association.pdf

British Columbia Association of Municipal Chiefs of Police

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/British-Columbia-Association-of-Municipal-Chiefs-of-Police.pdf

British Columbia Automobile Association (BCAA)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/British-Columbia-Automobile-Association-BCAA.pdf

Buddha Barn

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Buddha-Barn.pdf

Canadian Alliance for Responsible Cannabis Production

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Alliance-for-Responsible-Cannabis-Production.pdf

Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Canadian-Association-of-Pharmacy-Distribution-Management.pdf

Canadian Association of Medical Cannabis Dispensaries (CAMCD)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Association-of-Medical-Cannabis-Dispensaries-CAMCD.pdf

Canadian Cancer Society

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Cancer-Society.pdf

Canadian Cannabis Co-op

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Cannabis-Co-op.pdf

Canadian Drug Policy Coalition

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Drug-Policy-Coalition.pdf

Canadian Federation of Independent Business

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Federation-of-Independent-Business.pdf

Canadian Home Builders' Association of BC (CHBA BC)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Home-Builders-Association-of-BC-CHBA.pdf

Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Life-and-Health-Insurance-Association-Inc..pdf

Canadian Media Awareness Project
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Media-Awareness-Project.pdf

Canadian Mental Health Association British Columbia (CMHA BC)
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Canadian-Mental-Health-Association-of-BC-CMHA-BC.pdf

Cannabis Canada Association
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Cannabis-Canada.pdf

Cannabis Commerce Association of Canada
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Cannabis-Commerce-Association-of-Canada.pdf

Cannabis Compliance Inc.
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Cannabis-Compliance-Inc..pdf

Cannabis Growers of Canada (CGC)
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Cannabis-Growers-of-Canada.pdf

Cannabis Trade Alliance of Canada
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Cannabis-Trade-Alliance-of-Canada.pdf

Canopy Growth Corporation
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Canopy-Growth-Corporation.pdf

Central Saanich Police Board
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Central-Saanich-Police-Board.pdf

Centre for Addictions Research of BC
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Centre-for-Addictions-Research-of-BC.pdf

Child Health BC
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Child-Health-BC.pdf

City of Abbotsford
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Abbotsford.pdf

City of Chilliwack
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Chilliwack.pdf

City of Dawson Creek
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Dawson-Creek.pdf

City of Delta
engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-Delta.pdf

City of Fernie

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-Fernie.pdf

City of Fort St. John

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Fort-St.-John.pdf

City of Grand Forks

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Grand-Forks.pdf

City of Kimberley

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Kimberley.pdf

City of Langford

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Langford-v2.pdf

City of Langley

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-Langley.pdf

City of Nelson

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Nelson.pdf

City of North Vancouver

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-North-Vancouver.pdf

City of Parksville

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-Parksville.pdf

City of Port Coquitlam

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City of Quesnel

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City of Richmond 1

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City of Richmond 2

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City of Richmond 3

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-Richmond-3.pdf

City of Rossland

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Rossland-V2.pdf>

City of Surrey

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Surrey.pdf

City of Vancouver

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/City-of-Vancouver.pdf

City of Vernon

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-Vernon.pdf

City of West Kelowna

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-West-Kelowna.pdf

City of White Rock

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/City-of-White-Rock.pdf

Clean Air Coalition of BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Clean-Air-Coalition-of-BC.pdf

College of Naturopathic Physicians of British Columbia

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/College-of-Naturopathic-Physicians.pdf

Craft Cannabis Association of BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Craft-Cannabis-Association-of-BC.pdf

Craft Cannabis Community of the Gulf Islands

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Craft-Cannabis-Community-of-the-Gulf-Islands.pdf

District of Kent

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/District-of-Kent.pdf

District of Kitimat

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/District-of-Kitimat.pdf

District of North Vancouver

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/District-of-North-Vancouver.pdf

District of Tofino

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/District-of-Tofino.pdf

District of West Vancouver

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/District-of-West-Vancouver.pdf

Doctors of BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Doctors-of-BC.pdf

Doventi Capital

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Doventi-Capital.pdf

Earth's Own Naturals Ltd.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Earths-Own-Naturals-Ltd..pdf

Eden Medicinal Society

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Eden-Medicinal-Society.pdf

Educators for Sensible Drug Policy

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Educators-for-Sensible-Drug-Policy.pdf

ExtractionTek Solutions, Abstrax Tech and Holistek

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/ExtractionTek-Solutions-Abstrax-Tech-and-Holistek.pdf

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/First-Nations-Health-Authority's-FNHA.pdf

Fraser Health – Population and Public Health Team

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Fraser-Health-Population-and-Public-Health-Team.pdf

Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs Office

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Gitanyow-Hereditary-Chiefs-Office.pdf

Greatful Med Cannabis Society

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Greatful-Med-Cannabis-Society.pdf

Hagwilget Village Council

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Hagwilget-Village-Council.pdf

Health Officers Council of British Columbia

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Health-Officers-Council-of-BC.pdf

Hillside Pharms

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Hillside-Pharms.pdf

hmbldt

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/hmbldt.pdf

IBM Canada

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/IBM-Canada.pdf

Insurance Bureau of Canada

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Insurance-Bureau-of-Canada.pdf

Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/ICBC_Letter-to-Hon.-Mike-Farnworth_Oct-10-2017.pdf

Kootenay Outdoor Producer Co-op

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Kootenay-Outdoor-Producer-Co-op.pdf

Lake Cowichan First Nation

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Lake-Cowichan-First-Nation.pdf

Landlord BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Landlord-BC-Oct-18.pdf

Levity Solutions

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Levity-Solutions.pdf

Manufactured Home Park Owners Alliance of BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Manufactured-Home-Park-Owners-Alliance-of-BC.pdf

Marpole Business Association

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Marpole-Business-Association.pdf

Medicinal Cannabis Resource Centre Inc.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Medicinal-Cannabis-Resource-Centre-Inc..pdf

Merrco

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Merrco.pdf

MMJ Canada

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/MMJ-Canada.pdf

National Access Cannabis

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/National-Access-Cannabis.pdf

National Association of Cannabis Professionals

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/National-Association-of-Cannabis-Professionals.pdf

National Institute for Cannabis Health and Education (NICHE)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/National-Institute-for-Cannabis-Health-and-Education-NICHE.pdf

Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Neighbourhood-Pharmacy-Association-of-Canada.pdf

NextGenBio

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/NextGenBio.ca_.pdf

North Shore Standing Committee on Substance Abuse

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/North-Shore-Standing-Committee-on-Substance-Abuse.pdf

Northern Health Medical Health Officers

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Northern-Health-Medical-Health-Officers.pdf

Nuuvera Corp.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Nuuvera-Corporation.pdf

Office of the Representative for Children and Youth for British Columbia

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Office-of-the-Representative-for-Children-and-Youth-for-British-Columbia.pdf

Pain BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Pain-BC.pdf

Peace River Regional District

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Peace-River-Regional-District.pdf

Pineapple Express Cannabis Dispensary

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/PINEAPPLE-EXPRESS-CANNABIS-DISPENSARY.pdf

Powell River Regional District

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Powell-River-Regional-District.pdf

Prevent Cancer Now

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Prevent-Cancer-Now.pdf

Privateer Holdings

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Privateer-Holdings.pdf

RavenQuest BioMed Inc.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/RavenQuest-BioMed.pdf

Regional District of Central Kootenay

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Regional-District-of-Central-Kootenay.pdf

Resort Municipality of Whistler

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Resort-Municipality-of-Whistler.pdf

Responsible Marijuana Retail Alliance of BC

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Responsible-Marijuana-Retail-Alliance.pdf

Richmond FarmWatch

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Richmond-FarmWatch.pdf>

Rubicon Holdings Inc.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Rubicon-Holding-Inc.pdf

Rural Agency Store Advisory Society (RASAS)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Rural-Agency-Store-Advisory-Society.pdf

School District 42 Board of Education, Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/School-District-42-Board-of-Education.pdf

School District 81 (Fort Nelson)

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/School-District-81-Fort-Nelson.pdf

Smart Approaches to Marijuana Canada

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Smart-Approaches-to-Marijuana-Canada.pdf

Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Squamish-Lillooet-Regional-District.pdf

Starbuds Medical Access Centers

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Starbuds-Medical-Access-Centers.pdf

Tantalus Labs

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Tantalus.pdf

The Internet Dispensary

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/The-Internet-Dispensary.pdf

The Kootenay's Medicine Tree Inc.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/The-Kootenays-Medicine-Tree-Inc..pdf

Tilray

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Tilray-Submission-BC-Cannabis-Consultation.pdf

Tk'emlups te Secwepemc

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Tkemlups-te-Secwepemc.pdf

Token Naturals Ltd.

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Token-Naturals.pdf

Tousaw Law Corporation

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Tousaw-Law-Corporation.pdf

Town of Oliver

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Town-of-Oliver.pdf

Town of View Royal

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Town-of-View-Royal.pdf

Township of Langley

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Township-of-Langley.pdf

Trees Dispensary

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/11/Trees-Dispensary.pdf

True Leaf Medicine International

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/True-Leaf-Medicine-International.pdf

Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officers

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Vancouver-Coastal-Health-Medical-Health-Officers.pdf

Village of Cumberland

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Village-of-Cumberland.pdf

Village of Midway

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Village-of-Midway.pdf

Western Convenience Stores Association

engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/217/2017/10/Western-Convenience-Stores-Association.pdf

Yuułuꞵitꞵatꞵ Government

<https://tinyurl.com/ydx6v2a9>

For more information, please visit us online:

engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/consultation/bc-cannabis-regulation/



BRITISH
COLUMBIA