



February 23, 2021

The Honorable Evan Low
Chair, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 379
Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: AB 273 (Irwin): Cannabis: advertisements: highways.
NOTICE OF OPPOSITION**

Dear Chairman Low,

The California Cannabis Industry Association (CCIA) writes in strong opposition to AB 273 by Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin. Existing law bans cannabis billboard advertising visible from an interstate highway. AB 273 would expand that prohibition to include all billboard advertising visible from an interstate highway or a state highway within California.

California's legal cannabis industry is among the most highly-regulated industries in the state. Both existing law, and subsequent regulations impose strict advertising standards and prohibit cannabis advertising on city streets within 1,000 feet of daycare centers, K-12 schools or playgrounds. Rigorous safeguards have also been implemented to ensure that products do not appeal to minors or encourage cannabis use by persons under 21 year of age.

Unfortunately, AB 273 eliminates one of the only pathways for cannabis operators to advertise their businesses, undermining California's legal industry and serving to strengthen the unregulated, illicit cannabis market where youth prevention is not a priority.

Moreover, AB 273 holds cannabis to a different standard than other regulated, age restricted products. In fact, with the exception of tobacco, which was settled as part of a federal Master Settlement Agreement, alcohol, gambling and adult entertainment can all legally advertise on billboards. Restricting legal cannabis businesses from advertising in a manner that is different than other legal businesses will continue the negative stigmas and harmful stereotypes perpetuated for decades by the failed War on Drugs.

Lastly, it should be noted that no other state where cannabis has been legalized has an outright ban on billboard advertising by legal cannabis businesses. The era of cannabis prohibition is ending. With the recent change in federal leadership, and more voters approving adult-use cannabis in their states, the

momentum for change is stronger than ever. As such, California must stand as a leader in implementing fair, safe and equitable cannabis policies. Regretfully, AB 273 is a step in the wrong direction.

For all the reasons previously stated, the California Cannabis Industry Association opposes AB 273 and requests your NO vote when it is heard in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lindsay Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lindsay Robinson
Executive Director

Cc: Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, 44th District
Members, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Robert Sumner, Chief Consultant, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Danielle Sires, Senior Consultant, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Bill Lewis, Assembly Republican Caucus