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As expected, sales volume of cannabis products in California for Q1 2021 outpaced sales volume for the same period last year. Total sales volume for 2021 is on track to eclipse previous year performance as the popularity of cannabis continues to grow across the nation. Cities that regulate are reaping the financial rewards that follow.

Members of this council have been directly involved with economic development efforts in our city and profess to be advocates of business, but are firmly opposed to regulated and prosperous cannabis retail activity. These views are in sharp contrast to staff efforts to recruit and secure sustained business relationships with components of the industry. Regrettably, a member is on record insulting the CEO of a leading nationwide cannabis enterprise by commenting that sales volume projections may have been overstated. This may have impacted further investment in our city by the company

The voters of this city have repeatedly demonstrated approval of regulated cannabis commerce dating back to Proposition 19 in 2010, when we were the only city in Solano County to voice support for legalized cannabis. Benicia once again led all cities in our county in support of Proposition 64 of 2016, followed by a successful advisory measure vote last year on the issue of additional retail stores. Further, a politician with a history of outspoken opposition to cannabis in Benicia was soundly rejected by the voters.

There is NO dispute that a majority of the Benicia community supports commercial cannabis enterprises as a part of our economy. There is NO question that a majority wants another dispensary. It has been six months since the citizens expressed a preference for an additional retail store, and efforts to honor that vote with appropriate action should be agendized for discussion.

A member of this council has indicated "a big fight" over the prospect of an additional retail cannabis store. Given repeated voter support, consistent growth of the industry in our city, strong consumer interest, prolific revenue generation and state grants, there is NO good reason to continue to oppose expanded retail in Benicia.

The fight is over, the voters have spoken.

Follow the money!

Stan Golovich

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