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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**SUP. DAS WILLIAMS SNARES MORE THAN $30,000 IN DONATIONS FROM CANNABIS GROWERS – ALL PENDING FINAL PERMITS - IN JUST 4 MONTHS**

The swamp encircling the SB Board of Supervisors just got deeper and murkier.

Based on the most recent semi-annual donation reports filed, Sup. Das Williams has raked in a stunning $30,500 ***from 12 different cannabis growers – all of whom are awaiting final permits, while operating under*** provisional licenses in unincorporated Carpinteria. Another has a project under appeal in the Santa Ynez Valley and yet another has an appeal scheduled for later this month.

What is most alarming is the fact that numerous cannabis industry applicants are donating unprecedented sums to Supervisor Williams, in advance of crucial votes that he will cast - weighing the concerns of residents, schools, the avocado and wine industries as opposed to the economic interests of marijuana growers. On every occasion since 2016, Williams has voted for the latter for his own District.

The *L.A.Times* [6-12-19] article by Joe Mozingo revealed significant amounts of cannabis donations to Supervisors Williams and Lavagninoduring the very period [2017-18] that the Board of Supervisors was drafting and voting on the Cannabis Ordinance. And they voted accordingly! WE DID NOT EXPECT TO SEE THIS PRACTICE CONTINUED; yet it is clear that Williams will receive far GREATER sums from pot growers this year for his 2020 Supervisor campaign.

This underlines the urgent need for reforms at the Board of Supervisors. At present, the BOS operates with the impunity of czars with no limits on campaign contributions, no limits on lobbyists, no ethical watchdog, and no mandatory public oversight. Under current rules, the billion dollar cannabis lobby could literally dump one million dollars or more on Sup. Williams prior to the March 2020 election and likely do so without the public learning about it, at that time.

According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Santa Barbara County held 868 or 31% of active cannabis licenses in the State as of 8/8/2019. Of those, an astounding 281 are in Carpinteria.

CONCERNED CARPINTERIANS urges the Board of Supervisors [BOS] to:

1. Demand recusal from Sup. Williams and Lavagnino on all pending cannabis appeals and permits - and any appeals going forward from cannabis donors

2. Impose a cap on total donations; impose a cap on individual donors *and issue quarterly reports -* as is required for state and federal elections

3. Mandate a two year wait before lobbyists can work for the BOS; *Federal law stipulates a one year wait.*

4. Create an Ethics Committee of non-partisan professionals to oversee the BOS and issue guidance on conflicts of interests

5. Prohibit secret Ad hoc Committees and mandate public hearings for all land use issues *with adequate noticing to all residents within a two miles radius*

6. Extend deadline for all related to cannabis operations to a minimum of 90 days to allow residents and existing agriculture time to prepare with attorneys.

**If the BOS fails to adopt these basic ethical standards – the norm for most all other counties – we endorse the Good Government Initiative under way for the 2020 ballot.**

As a Supervisor and a decision maker, Das Williams is expected to render an objective vote on appeals coming before him and represent all constituents of the First District – not do the bidding of his cannabis industry donors.

Likewise, Supervisor Lavagnino’s Form 460 reveals that in the first week of February 2019, he received $7000 from four separate Carpinteria cannabis operators. It is noteworthy that no cannabis industry-related donors were named on disclosure forms submitted by Supervisors Hartmann, Adam and Hart.

For more information: <https://www.concernedcarpinterians.com>

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