

Hello Lake County BOS,

My name is Forest Nikola Elie. I've been involved in agriculture for over 20 years. I'm a farmer, rancher, father, and a licensed real estate professional. I've farmed cannabis in Humboldt, Trinity, Mendocino, and today operate under a Small Use Permit here in Lake County.

I've met farmers everywhere and helped many purchase property here. They chose Lake County for one reason:

The rules were clear.

Permits were long-term.

And there were no proposed changes to the ordinance that would affect farmers.

That stability brought investment.

The proposed increase to offsite residence setbacks—1,000 feet or more—puts that at risk. It affects nearly every farm I've worked with and sends one message:

Uncertainty.

And when uncertainty comes in,  
investment leaves.

Cannabis is agriculture.

And Lake County is pro-agriculture.

Farmers support the local economy—they create jobs, spend locally, and keep small businesses alive.

Cannabis is also bringing younger generations back into farming, at a time when the average U.S. farmer is 58 years old.

Increasing setbacks and turning approved projects into nonconforming uses doesn't strengthen agriculture—it weakens it.

When I started here in 2017,  
Lake County welcomed farmers.  
It supported agriculture—including cannabis.

I encourage you to stay focused on that vision:  
Support agriculture. Don't restrict it further.

Standard California real estate disclosures clearly state that properties near agriculture may experience noise, odors, and dust.  
Agriculture comes with impacts—that's understood.

So the question is simple:  
Do we want to support a growing agricultural economy... or slow it down?

Cannabis is agriculture—please continue to treat it that way.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,  
Forest Nikola Elie