



Boston City Council
ED FLYNN
Councilor - District 2

**Statement from Councilor Flynn Opposing the Removal of the Current Restriction for a
Half-Mile Buffer Zone between Cannabis Establishments in the City
May 15, 2024**

I remain opposed to the Cannabis Establishment Zoning Amendment to remove the half-mile buffer requirement between cannabis establishments in the City. Removing the half mile buffer zone would have a significant impact on every neighborhood in the city of Boston.

As the Councilor representing a diverse area from Downtown, Chinatown, South Boston, Bay Village, parts of the South End and the Back Bay, I value the feedback of our residents, neighbors, and business community while understanding that each neighborhood is unique and has different sets of challenges. Over the last few years, neighbors and residents throughout District 2 have consistently advocated to enforce the half mile buffer zone. They have also continued to contact my office regarding quality of life issues and people smoking openly in public. Given the difficulty with enforcement on smoking cannabis in public, I believe the removal of the buffer zone would only further exacerbate these existing quality of life concerns for residents.

For instance, I have serious concerns for the Downtown area, which is a highly dense neighborhood that already has three cannabis establishments in close proximity to one another. Combined with day-care facilities (which do not fall under the state's requirement for a 500 foot buffer from school entrances), a large student and resident population, and nonprofits that also service vulnerable populations in close proximity, as well as existing challenges with public safety and crime, the removal of this half mile buffer would take away any remaining community safeguard with the potential to negatively impact quality of life in the neighborhood.

Allowing the half mile buffer to lapse may create a similar dynamic to package and liquor stores in the City, potentially saturate the market, and harm existing operators. This will also create the potential for both new and existing operators to either not engage with civic organizations, or walk away from existing community agreements entirely.