Insert Date

Dear Senator or Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We are dealing with an epic failure of leadership and broken promises from the Governor that must be remedied now. This letter is to bring to your attention the injustice that is being committed against us and over 800 small business owners. We are mad, disappointed, and hurting. This group has invested over $100 million in the application process alone and more than 1 million hours.

We are social equity applicants for Craft Grow, Infuser and Transporter licenses in Illinois. As social equity applicants, we, our families, our employees, and our communities have been devastated by the War on Drugs. The legalization of cannabis and announcement of Illinois’ social equity program to include those who have been hurt by its prohibition came with great hope.

<OPTIONAL> INSERT PERSONAL STORY/DETAILS ABOUT YOUR TEAM AND WHY PARTICIPATING IN THE LEGAL CANNABIS BUSINESS IN ILLINOIS IS IMPORTANT TO YOU AND COMMUNITY>

While Governor Pritzker has touted Illinois as the most social-equity centric state for Cannabis, the reality is that he has NOT kept his promises:

* “The purpose of this legislation is not to immediately make cannabis widely available or to maximize product on the shelves. But instead, the defining purpose of legalization is **to maximize equity.**” – JB Pritzker, December 2019
* "The war on cannabis has destroyed families. It has filled jails and prisons with nonviolent offenders. It has disproportionately affected black and brown communities. Every state that has legalized cannabis has seen high demand and long lines in its earliest weeks, and to be sure, our state will, too. But unlike other states, in Illinois, we purposely built a system where the market has room to grow, **so that entrepreneurs, including especially those from the communities devastated by the war on drugs, will have real opportunities in this industry."** – JB Pritzker, December 2019

**Here we sit in January 2021.** Cannabis has been legal in Illinois for over 12 months and we have yet to see any benefit. We have incurred extreme hardship and financial loss due to the unlawful delay of the statutory July 1, 2020 license award date. A conservative estimate of the total additional and unexpected cost for the 455 Craft Grower, 115 Infuser, and 250 Transporter applicants per month of delay is $5 million or $30+ million as of this letter. We can’t sleep at night while this drags on. We struggle daily with whether to stay compliant with the application process or to cut our heavy losses.

**Why is there a delay that is hurting the very people the state wanted to help?** There is no reason.COVID cannot be the reason that the Department of Agriculture cannot make decisions between the due date of April 30 and today! We understand COVID has made operations challenging, but the State has had nearly 8 months to score these applications. There must be another reason why the state is not keeping its promise to social equity applicants.

**We need ACTION NOW! Please tell Governor Pritzker to issue Craft Licenses immediately** so this community can move forward, start healing from past harms, and begin contributing to the financial health of our Communities and Illinois.  Now is the time to make sure Governor Pritzker and the state live up to the promise of:

* **Creating opportunities for social equity entrepreneurs**
* **Adding employment and opportunity in an essential industry**
* **Collecting much needed tax revenue (at least $200M annually)**

Join us to #FreeTheCraftLicenses #LetMyPeopleGrow #JBKeepYourPromise

Name

Address

District