

We are confronting unanticipated consequences

Some cannabis growers have objected to “moving the goalposts” in the permitting process. This is a sports metaphor; in hockey, for example, a well-timed slam into the goalposts may help block a goal. It is considered unfair because a well-established rule of a game that has been codified for decades (or centuries) is being broken in order to disadvantage one player/team relative to the other.

Five years ago, we did our best to anticipate the consequences of legalization, and designed laws and permitting processes accordingly. But the nature of the industry is that it takes years for those consequences to play out. In particular, the cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts of many grows were harder to anticipate than the effects of a single operation, leading to the current unsatisfactory situation.

Now that we are confronting unanticipated consequences such as the collapses of prices and water supplies, in fact everyone wants goalposts moved, we just disagree about which ones – cultivation taxes reduced, water supplies protected, etc. To adhere to flawed processes simply because they were the ones we started with — as at least one Planning Commissioner has advocated — would be a serious mistake. This isn’t moving the goalposts to gain an advantage over one grower, it is redesigning the game field so that it works for all of us. It’s time for 3.0.

— *Jim Moore, Bayside*