



THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME

I have made the decision to veto the Council order creating the Impacted Neighborhood Stabilization Fund. This order creates a new fund that will take in 50% of the excise tax revenue that the City earns on recreational marijuana sales. The fund will be dedicated to “improving the quality of life in and economic capacity of” neighborhoods that have been disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition.

I have not chosen to veto this order because I disagree with the Council’s motivation for creating this fund. I completely understand their intent; nevertheless, I cannot approve this order as it is currently written. My chief concern is that it is not prudent fiscal policy to dedicate half of a revenue source to a fund, when the size of those revenues is still unknown. Additionally, I believe clear procedures for how this revenue shall be used should be created before they are dedicated to the fund.

On Friday, November 30th, I met with Councilors Melvin Edwards and Jesse Lederman, along with my Chief of Staff, Tom Ashe and our Chief Administrative and Financial Officer, T.J. Plante to discuss this order and the creation of the Neighborhood Stabilization Fund. I agreed with their motivation for creating the fund and thought that we had reached an understanding that the order would dedicate 25% of the revenues generated by the excise tax on marijuana to the fund. I am not comfortable with setting the amount at 50% as a starting point. We can continue to look at this as we get a clearer picture of the actual revenue generated.

I look forward to working with the Council to revisit this issue and to collaborating with them on developing a set of clear policies and procedures that will govern how this fund shall be used. Working together, I believe we can develop a solution that will exemplify the commitment that the members of the Council and I both hold to the City’s neighborhoods and sound fiscal policy.