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## RESIDENTS DEMAND PAUSE ON CANNABIS TAX CHANGES



By [Francisco Ramirez Jr](#)

### Push for Accountability

During the Fresno City Council meeting on June 26, 2025, resident Melissa Noriega raised concerns about proposed changes to the cannabis business license tax. Speaking for the Children's Movement of Fresno, Noriega called for a delay in the vote until a Cannabis Oversight Commission is fully operational. "When voters approved the original ordinance, they expected transparency and oversight via a cannabis oversight commission," she said, noting that despite 11 applicants, no members have been appointed to the commission.

Noriega highlighted the importance of the \$700,000 in cannabis tax revenue, stating, "That revenue is likely to grow." She stressed that these public funds require public oversight to ensure they are managed responsibly, reflecting the [community's](#) expectation for accountability in handling cannabis-related finances.

### Focus on Community Benefits

Noriega emphasized the need for a clear plan to use cannabis tax revenue effectively. She argued, "Without oversight, public input, or a clear spending plan, we risk failing those we



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aim to serve." Representing the Children's Movement of Fresno, which seeks to make the [city the best place in the nation](#) to raise a family, Noriega urged the council to prioritize investments that support children and families. She outlined three requests: pausing the vote until the commission is active, ensuring meaningful public engagement on the changes, and detailing how current and future revenues will be allocated.

The absence of a functioning oversight commission has sparked concerns about governance. Noriega pointed out that the commission operates voluntarily without salary or per diem, making its establishment a feasible step toward ensuring transparency and community involvement in managing these funds.

## Council's Next Steps

The Fresno City Council, including President Mike Karbassi, Vice President Miguel Arias, and Councilmembers Annalisa Perea, Tyler Maxwell, Brandon Vang, Nick Richardson, and Nelson Esparza, did not directly address Noriega's [concerns during the public comment](#) period. The meeting moved on to other agenda items, leaving the proposed cannabis tax changes unresolved in the discussion.

Noriega's plea underscores ongoing community demands for transparency in local governance. As the [council considers](#) these changes, the lack of an operational Cannabis Oversight Commission remains a key issue for residents advocating for responsible management of public funds. The resolution of this matter could significantly impact public trust in how cannabis tax revenues are utilized.

What are your thoughts on ensuring oversight for cannabis tax funds?