

Presentation to the
Commerce and Gaming Committee,
WA State House of Representatives

November 30, 2022



**Social Equity
in Cannabis
Task Force**



Presentation Overview

- Task Force Process
- Final Recommendations
- Next Steps

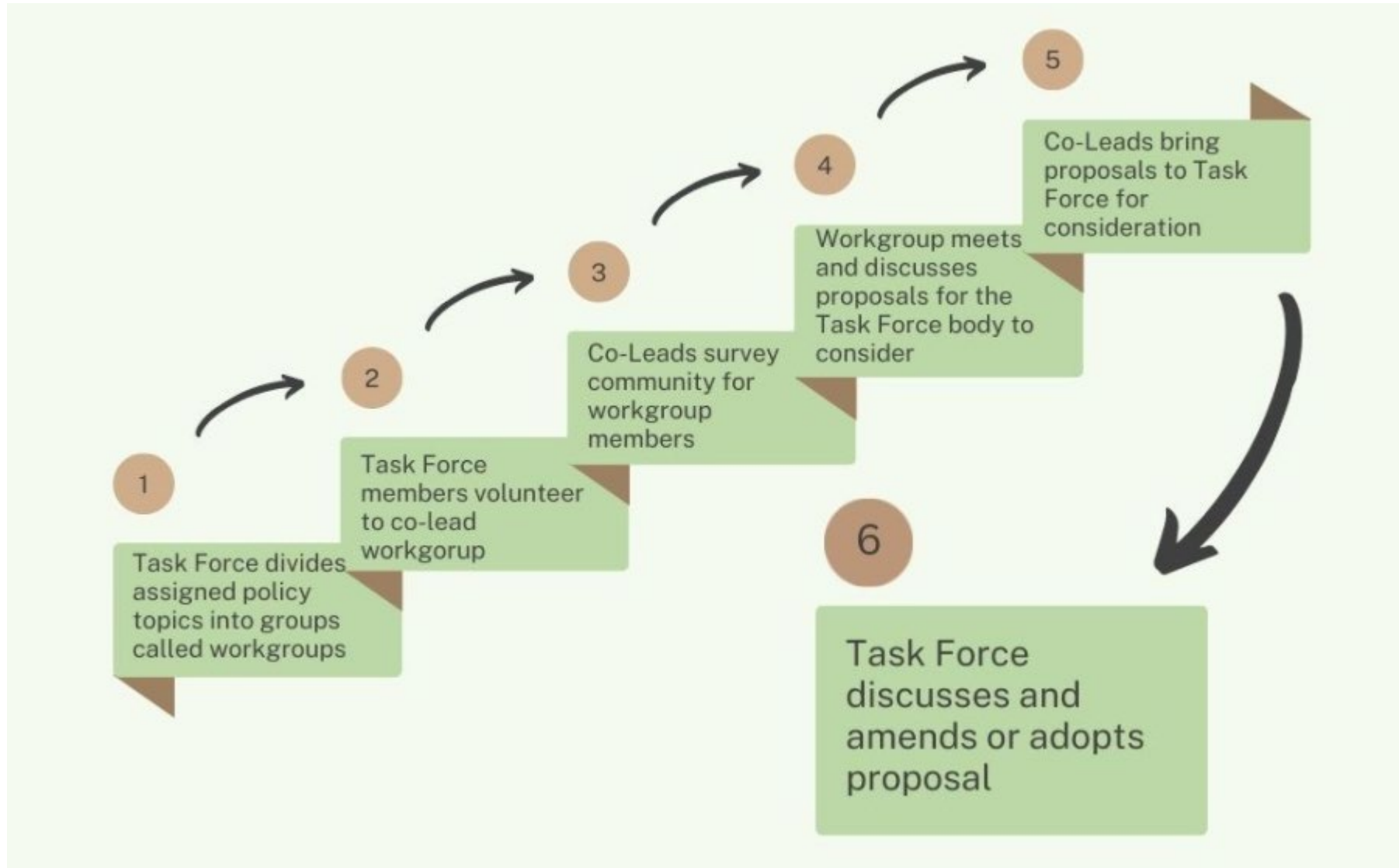
Task Force Membership

Group	Member Name
WA State Senate, Democratic Caucus	Sen. Rebecca Saldaña (Legislative Co-Chair)
Cannabis Processor	Jim Makoso (Community Co-Chair)
WA State Senate, Republican Caucus	Sen. Curtis King
WA State House of Representatives, Republican Caucus	Rep. Kelly Chambers
WA State House of Representatives, Democratic Caucus	Rep. Debra Entenman
Attorney General's Office	Joyce Bruce
Liquor and Cannabis Board	Ollie Garrett
Department of Commerce	Alison Beason
Commission on African American Affairs	Dorian Waller
Commission on Hispanic American Affairs	Carmen Rivera
Governor's Office of Indian Affairs	Craig Bill
Org. representing African American Community	Michelle Meriweather
Org. representing Latinx Community	David Mendoza

Group	Member Name
Labor Organization Involved in Cannabis Industry	Joe Solorio
Association of Washington Cities	--
Advisory Member	Paul Brice
Individual Currently Holding a Cannabis Retail License	Tamara Berkley
Individual Currently Holding a Cannabis Retail License	Pablo Antonio Gonzalez
Individual Currently Holding a Producer License	Raft Hollingsworth
Individual Currently Holding a Producer License	Monica Martinez
Cannabis Processor	Micah Sherman

We deeply appreciate all current and former Task Force members as well as community members who enriched the Task Force process by contributing their time, energy, and expertise.

Recommendation Process



Social Equity in Cannabis

Social Equity: Developing, strengthening, and supporting policies that distribute and prioritize resources to Black and Brown communities that have been historically marginalized. By advancing these policies, we can begin to repair the harms that have been caused in these communities.

Social Equity in Cannabis: The intentional inclusion of Black and Brown communities that have been disproportionately harmed by the “war on drugs” into the cannabis industry in a way that creates social and economic justice.

Final Recommendations

Building a just cannabis economy requires addressing the following areas in a comprehensive manner:

Access

Removing barriers to access for recreational cannabis licenses for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities.

Industry Support

Providing social equity licensees financial, instructional, and institutional support so they can both enter and flourish in Washington's cannabis market.

Opportunity

Maintaining an equitable marketplace to ensure that businesses created by social equity applicants can thrive in Washington's system, even if there are changes to federal laws.

Community Investment

Addressing the damages of systemic oppression by investing in programs that focus on resources and care to build healthy communities.

Recommendations for the WA State Liquor and Cannabis Board:

- Use the Task Force's ranking formula and indicators for disproportionately impacted areas (DIA) in conjunction with the Community Based Scoring Rubric when awarding social equity licenses.
- Re-evaluate applicant criminal history restrictions related to licensure.

Recommendations for the Legislature:

- Focus on policies to expand cannabis licensure opportunities for social equity applicants. Increase the number of current licenses and create new license types reserved for social equity applicants.
- Ensure that all licenses available for social equity retail licenses are not bound by county and can be used statewide in any county, contingent on local jurisdiction approval.
- Consider creating new license types accessible initially to social equity applicants exclusively.

Recommendations for the Legislature (cont'd):

- Expand the scope of the Technical Assistance and Mentorship Program to include financial assistance for social equity applicants.
- Create a professional development and workforce training program to support social equity applicants.
- Create a community reinvestment fund from cannabis tax revenue to support communities harmed by the “war on drugs”.
- Re-evaluate regulatory oversight of cannabis production.
- Legalize residential cannabis cultivation.

Thank You

For questions and additional information, please contact the Task Force at healthequity@sboh.wa.gov.