

## Proposition 64

Recommendation: No

“Legalize it” has long been a stoner dream. “Imagine all the money we could save by redirecting law enforcement resources away from pot busts and the money we could make by taxing the cannabis trade,” goes the thinking. At last, the day to end prohibition and costly prohibition has come with Proposition 64. But we’re not ready.

The support for Proposition 64 is telling. Most of the big money comes from, well, those with big money who see cannabis as a financial juggernaut. And it may well be. But in the North Bay and farther north, the many small growers working in the shadows fear the impact of legal pot. Without a well-crafted plan to bring these growers into the fold and keep corporations vertically integrated companies at bay, we could be looking at severe and painful socioeconomic disruption on the North Coast.

This isn’t about protectionism. Like it or not, cannabis is the economic mainstay of Mendocino, Humboldt and Trinity counties. If falling prices and over-taxation drive these small growers out of business, we’ll be looking at a spike in poverty and other social ills that will look like Appalachia West.

And meanwhile, efforts to regulate the medical cannabis industry are barely off the ground. Adding a legal recreational market on top is simply too much too soon. Let’s legalize, yes, but let’s do it right and we think that means letting the legislature craft a bill. That’s messy and slow but it will probably, hopefully, come closer to serving the greater good. At the very least, it may help keep the feds off our backs, too.

—Pacific Sun staff

## Superior Court Judge—Office 2

Recommendation: Mike Coffino

Well this is a tough one. Mike Coffino, a Marin Deputy Public Defender since 2003, and Sheila Lichtblau, a Deputy County Counsel who has worked for Marin since 2006, both bring long lists of experience to the table in the race for the seat left open by exiting Judge Faye D’Opal.

Coffino, raised in Mill Valley and a civil and criminal lawyer for the past 20 years, has represented indigent people inclu

the homeless, those with mental illness, military veterans and immigrants. Lichtblau, a Bay Area native, has represented poor, schools, businesses large and small, the county and the state.

Lichtblau, though currently serving both as a Superior Court Judge Pro Tem and federal mediator, lacks the courtroom experience that Coffino boasts. And we worry a bit about any political connections that she may have. Coffino, with more than 50 jury trials under his belt, has dedicated his career to defending the constitutional rights of California's most vulnerable populations.

Coffino stresses the fact that Marin County is the only county in the Bay Area that lacks a judge with prior public defense experience. We believe that he would bring a balance of perspective to the bench.

On top of Coffino's courtroom experience, we were impressed by his calm demeanor, and his compassion for all people we heard him speak recently. He emphasized the importance of taking the time to listen to the stories of those he works with and we could sense his stellar listening skills and empathy.

—Pacific Sun staff

#### **Marin County Supervisor—District 4**

Recommendation: Dennis Rodoni

The race for Marin's District 4 Supervisor is an equally tough one to endorse. Dominic Grossi, a rancher and business owner, and Dennis Rodoni, director of the North Marin Water District, agree on many of the same points, and both seem ready and willing to tackle the biggest issues facing the county: Traffic, affordable housing and homelessness, to name a few.

When we interviewed the two candidates for our recent 'Moderate Marin' story, we found that both have deep local roots and both are open to new ideas for problem-solving.

Grossi, 43, was endorsed by the Marin Independent Journal because of "his youth and fresh perspective." Although we know that a fresh perspective is great, we admire Rodoni's 20-plus years of public service. The 64-year-old has been re-elected to office five times since first being elected in 1995, and served on the boards of multiple community and governmental organizations. His priorities include opposing out-of-scale development, addressing coastal flooding and reducing the county's carbon footprint, while protecting Marin's small town way of life.