

# El Dorado ordinance fuels outcry over pot-growing boom

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

The tense public hearing was three hours in Tuesday when a friend pushed Joyce Hall in her walker to address the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors. The frail, 100-pound woman rose, grasped the lectern with both hands and began to cry.

“You’re going to kill us,” said Hall, 57, a Garden Valley resident and medical marijuana patient who suffers from a rare immune disorder that causes severe weight loss. For the past year, a caregiver has been growing 12 marijuana plants on Hall’s property under a September 2013 county ordinance that permits individual patients to grow 200 square feet of plants in fenced off plots away from neighbors’ property lines.

But El Dorado County Sheriff John D’Agostini, who originally supported the policy, now says the county’s marijuana ordinance was a “big mistake.”

The sheriff blames the ordinance – intended as a compassionate action for local medical marijuana patients – for broadcasting a “weed friendly” message. He says it has attracted criminal profiteers who are ripping up public and private lands and cultivating hundreds of thousands of plants on a scale vastly exceeding county guidelines.

**Read the whole story**