

STATE OF MINNESOTA

DISTRICTCOURT

RAMSEY COUNTY

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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Cristina Aranguiz, Jodi Connolly,

**ORDER**

Plaintiffs,

vs

Court File No. 62-CV-24-7403

Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management,  
Charlene Briner,

Defendants.

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Green Leaf MN LLC,

Plaintiff,

vs

Court File No. 62-CV-24-7412

Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management,  
Charlene Briner,

Defendants.

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Wild Domain, LLC

Plaintiff,

vs

Court File No. 62-CV-24-7413

Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management,  
Charlene Briner,

Defendants.

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Hendo Industries LLC, Northern Illusion LLC,  
Milstagrams LLC, Better Bud Co LLC,  
Thrifties LLC et. al.

Plaintiffs,

vs

Court File No. 62-CV-24-7411

Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management,  
Charlene Briner,

Defendants.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Honorable Stephen L. Smith heard arguments in the matters referenced above on November 25, 2024. The hearing was conducted remotely via Zoom. David Asp and Laura Matson appeared on behalf of plaintiffs Cristina Aranguiz (“Aranguiz”), who was present, and Jody Connolly (“Connolly”), who was not. David Standa appeared on behalf of plaintiffs Green Leaf MN LLC and Wild Domain LLC. Courtney Ernston appeared on behalf of plaintiffs Hendo Industries LLC, Northern Illusion LLC, Milstagrams LLC, Better Bud Co. LLC, Thrifties LLC, and Mohamed Abdi. Oliver Larson and Ryan Petty appeared on behalf of defendants, Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management and Interim Director, Charlene Briner, and Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison.

Based on all the files, pleadings, records, and proceedings herein, the Court makes the following:

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management (“OCM”) denied applications from Aranguiz and Connolly to participate in the social equity lottery for dispensary licenses. They filed the instant Complaint on November 21, 2024, seeking, among other things, a writ of mandamus ordering the OCM to comply with the “cannabis statutes and the Minnesota Administrative Procedure Act.” Aranguiz and Connolly also moved the court for a temporary restraining order enjoining the OCM from conducting a lottery to award social equity licenses on November 26, 2024, pending resolution of their case. Additional plaintiffs subsequently filed separate lawsuits with similar claims and joined in the motion for a temporary injunction. The state moved to dismiss Aranguiz’s and Connolly’s case.

2. The matter was scheduled for an emergency hearing on November 25, 2024.
3. Based on counsel's arguments, the court finds good cause to stay the social equity lottery and to allow plaintiffs to file certiorari pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 606.01. The court is mindful of the separation of powers implications here and does not make this decision lightly. *See Williams v. Smith*, 820 N.W.2d 807, 813 (Minn. 2012). But given the extraordinary circumstances presented by the timing of OCM's application decisions and the filing of these cases, a fair and reasoned decision by the Court of Appeals is not possible without a stay of the lottery.

**ORDER**

4. Plaintiffs shall seek review of the OCM's application decisions by writ of certiorari to the Court of Appeals.
5. The OCM shall stay the social equity lottery pending a decision from the Court of Appeals.

BY THE COURT:

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Stephen L. Smith  
Judge of District Court