



Carrington & Associates, LLC

"Continuing A Tradition of Excellence"

SB0821 – Cannabis - Medical Cannabis Boutique Grower License and Pesticides– Carrington & Associates, LLC – SUPPORT W/AMENDMENTS

Madam Chair, Madam Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee. My name is Darrell Carrington, here on behalf of Carrington & Associates, LLC. I am here to testify in SUPPORT of SB0821 with some amendments.

I greatly appreciate the efforts of all those responsible for bringing this issue forward. I have long argued that we should not have a one size fits all approach to the scope and size of our medical cannabis facilities. The larger integrated operators in the state have very large operations, therefore, I see little reason to oppose these small operations from coming into the marketplace. Additionally, there is a major shortage of quality medicine available in our marketplace due to the artificially low numbers of growers and processors in relation to our exploding patient base. We have over 120,000 patients in Maryland's Program and the number grows by a few hundred each week. For comparison, in my research, I could not find a state with such an out of control ratio of patients to growers. In the most severe cases, I have found states that have approximately 1,000 patients to each grower, in Maryland, that number is now at or around 10,000 patients per grower. That is truly ridiculous and the reason we have such a shortage in Maryland.

Another important aspect that must be noted, is that patients are going to the black-market to get their medicine again. Prices for medical cannabis in Maryland remain much higher than the black-market and since this is an out of pocket expense for our patients, they have to make that unfortunate choice. The black-market does not test its medicine nor ensure that the patient is getting what has been advertised. It is noteworthy, thanks to Maryland's laboratory testing program, no patients in our program suffered any ill effects from national vaping crisis last year. That is what a regulated marketplace produces, safe medicine. With this legislation, hopefully, we can make it reliable and cheaper.

I would ask that we remove the cap language for licenses, frankly, that is what gets us into trouble every time. Creating a competitive application process is unnecessary and as we have seen, can lead to unintended consequences. We have no need to worry about adding MBE language and the like, all applicants that meet a certain score can try their hand at becoming a medical cannabis grower.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully ask for your FAVORABLE report on SB0821 with the amendment offered.

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