



March 4, 2020

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for Senate Bill 699 - Automatic Expungement - Possession of Marijuana

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members:

As the State's Attorney for Baltimore City, I stand in strong support of Senate Bill 811, which, if passed, will require the "automatic expungement" of all court and police records pertaining to the disposition of a charge of possession of marijuana, and prescribe requirements and timelines for this process that vary based on the date the charge was entered and the existence of other charges in the case.

In 2019, my office made the decision, based on evidence and data, to no longer prosecute marijuana possession as we found doing so was reinforcing a racially biased practice, a waste of limited resources, and did not contribute to an increase in public safety. In addition to the reforms I implemented in my office, we wanted to ensure we were righting the wrongs of the past knowing the disparate enforcement had already had severe consequence in our communities; consequences which create social and economic barriers for individuals reentering into society by denying or restricting benefits otherwise available to all citizens. Specifically for marijuana possession charges, these individuals are suffering consequences for a substance that is now legal in 11 states and is personal possession is decriminalized in our State.

Senate Bill 699 allow for automatic expungement for these residents and begin to right the wrongs of the past. This is why I urge your favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marilyn J. Mosby".

Marilyn J. Mosby
State's Attorney for Baltimore City