

January 28, 2020

Hon. Chair Luke Clippinger
6 Bladen Street, House Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

Mr. Chair,

House Bill 73 protects the firearm rights of Marylanders who qualify to use medical cannabis. HB 73 limits access to the database of qualifying cannabis patients and codifies that a qualifying patient may not be denied the right to purchase, own, possess or carry a firearm on their status as a qualifying patient.

Relevant qualifying forms ask “are you a legal user of cannabis for medical purposes or are you issued a valid medical cannabis patient identification number or a valid medical cannabis patient identification card?” If you answer that question “yes” you lose your firearm ownership rights.

Combat veteran Josh O’Neil testified last year that he carries a firearm as part of his employment and would like to use cannabis for combat related injuries. Ironically, he works for the medical cannabis industry. He described his addiction to pain pills for two years and his recovery. “I am in horrible pain every day. I sleep about two and a half hours per night. All I am asking is to be able to sleep.” What does it say when we force those who served our country in combat to choose between employment, non-addictive medical solutions and perjury?

The commercial growth, distribution and sale of cannabis in Maryland violates federal law. We sanction a federally illegal industry but treat qualifying patients as second class citizens. We should pass House Bill 73 to protect the rights of those who chose non-addictive health care solutions.

Thank you for the hearing for House Bill 73. I am happy to discuss any questions and I ask for a favorable report.

Delegate Robin Grammer