



**House Bill 1078 - Cannabis - Regulation - Medical Cannabis Definition and Study
Position: Favorable**

March 30, 2022

Honorable Delores Kelley
Chair, Finance
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice-Chair Feldman, and members of the committee,

This written testimony is put forward on behalf of the Maryland Healthy Alternatives Association. Our association represents businesses from every segment of the hemp industry and is committed to protecting the public's access to safe alternatives to prescription medications.

First, we want to thank you for your continued work on this important issue. The House of Delegates made two important changes to this legislation that MHAA strongly supports. First, the House added an immediate restriction on selling these types of products to minors under the age of 21. Not only do we support this, but we look forward to working with the study group and the Legislature to further curtail access in future sessions to limit these products to age-restricted stores only.

Additionally, the House added a representative from MHAA to the study and we strongly support this addition. We agree that the hemp industry needs a regulatory framework that focuses on age gating and testing standards and believe that we can be of assistance in creating that framework as we have already been operating responsibly in these areas for years.

We want to be able to both ensure public safety while protecting this industry's ability to provide safe access to these products that help people improve their quality of life. Consumers of the products in question are much different from the average medical marijuana patient. These consumers are attracted to the fact that these products are significantly less potent than medical marijuana products. Delta 8 THC is 40-50% less psychoactive than medical marijuana and that is

the primary reason why people purchase them. The average consumer of Delta 8 is more in line with the traditional CBD consumer than they are with a medical marijuana patient.

It is important to draw these distinctions as we totally believe in regulation not just of the product itself, but also its packaging and presentation. We would like to be an ally and a resource to the legislature, the MMCC and the Department of Agriculture as we believe wholeheartedly that responsible hemp businesses and the medical cannabis industry can, and should, coexist.

Sincerely,
Maryland Healthy Alternatives Association

Nicholas Patrick

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