



HB 481 – Drug Paraphernalia for Administration – Decriminalization

Committee: Judiciary

Date: February 15, 2022

POSITION: Support with amendment

The Maryland Coalition of Families: Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) helps families who care for a loved one with behavioral health needs. Using personal experience, our staff provide one-to-one peer support and navigation services to family members with a child, youth or adult with a mental health, substance use or gambling issue.

MCF strongly supports HB 481 as amended.

The decriminalization of the possession of drug paraphernalia in Maryland is long overdue. It is one part of an overarching strategy that strives to get people with substance use disorders the treatment help that they need, rather than end up in correctional facilities.

But it is not just the possession of drug paraphernalia that must be decriminalized – distribution of drug paraphernalia must be included as well. This is especially needed to promote the use of harm reduction strategies.

For these reasons we urge a favorable report on HB 481 as amended.

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