

2022 GBCC HB 1 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Ashlie Bagwell

Position: FAV



**STATEMENT BY
THE GREATER BETHESDA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REGARDING
HOUSE BILL 1—CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT-CANNABIS—ADULT USE AND
POSSESSION
HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 14, 2022
POSITION: FAVORABLE REPORT**

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) was founded in 1926. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 550 businesses located throughout the Greater Bethesda area and beyond. On behalf of these members, we appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments on House Bill 1—Constitutional Amendment-Cannabis-Adult Use and Possession

The cannabis industry is one of the country's fastest growing industries. An estimated 321,000 people now work in the legal cannabis industry, and that number will only continue to increase. The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce supports this industry as it is and will continue to be an important part of Maryland's economy moving forward.,

While this bill, if passed, does not automatically legalize cannabis for adult use in Maryland, it does allow voters to decide whether or not to allow for that. We support what many surrounding states have already done, which is legalize cannabis for adult use. However, we are agnostic on the approach the state takes to establish a program that is appropriately regulated and taxed.

We respectfully request a favorable vote on. House Bill 1.

HB0001Cannabis_MLC_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0001
Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Clippinger

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0001 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The youth of this state, like the youth of most states and countries around the world, experiments with controlled substances. This process is something that legislation, criminality, and teaching cannot seem to change. Our sons and daughters, and in most cases we, ourselves, have experimented with cannabis. And yet, for many of our young people, a criminal record often starts with a small amount of cannabis.

How hard is it to get a job with a criminal record? How much extra struggle in a person's life is it worth?

Our members believe that we need to stop arresting our youth for doing just what many of us did when we were young. Personal use of cannabis should be legalized.

This bill would allow for a ballot measure to legalize the use and possession of cannabis by anyone who is at least 21 years old. The ballot measure, if it succeeds, would be effective as of July 1, 2023.

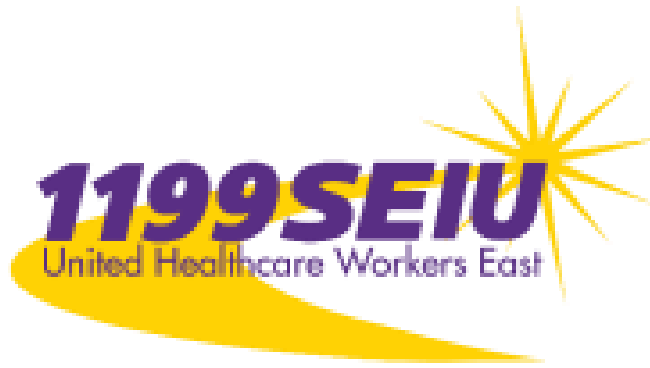
This makes sense. It's important to our members that we stop the war on our youth and throw our efforts into stopping more violent crimes.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

2022-Testimony-HB1 Constitutional Amendment - Cann

Uploaded by: Christopher Stevenson

Position: FAV



Testimony on HB0001
Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director with 1199SEIU- the largest healthcare union in the nation, where we represent over 10,000 healthcare workers in Maryland. We strongly support HB0001 because it puts the issue of decriminalizing cannabis on the ballot. Once on the ballot, citizens can vote to decriminalize cannabis possession, which would reduce Maryland's prison population and save the government money, which could be put towards other programs.

For 1199SEIU members, our mission has been to stand up for quality healthcare, good jobs, and social justice for all. We demand fair treatment for all persons, on and off the job, and this bill helps to ensure this goal. For many of our members who are minorities and live in majority minority neighborhoods, the arrests of minorities for small level offenses due to cannabis possession have and continue to skyrocket. Healthcare workers themselves have even been unable to move up the career ladder due to convictions related to marijuana.

To alleviate this problem, if this amendment passes it could provide a path for expungement opportunities and releases for past cannabis offenses, which in practice, could create some level of retribution for incarcerated citizens. In tandem with expungement and release relief, the number of arrests for targeted minorities would significantly decrease for low-level cannabis offenses, by which many minorities are often targeted. This matters to our members because the arrests of minority community members not only provide a loss of family structure and income to minority families, but it consequently disrupts entire communities including businesses, jobs, and other socio-economic factors.

In addition, by allowing cannabis to become legalized, the State would also create an additional revenue source that could fund many state programs and policies. For our members, the possible benefits of this bill far outweigh any conflicts that could arise from legalizing cannabis and therefore, urge a favorable report from the Committee on HB0001.

Respectfully,

Ricarra Jones
Maryland/DC Political Director
1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers- East
Cell: [443-844-6513](tel:443-844-6513)

HB 1 - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession.pdf

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

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President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

HB 1 – Constitutional Amendment – Cannabis – Adult Use and Possession House Judiciary Committee January 14, 2022

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President**

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1 – Constitutional Amendment – Cannabis – Adult Use and Possession. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 340,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Eighteen states and the District of Columbia have changed their laws to legalize or decriminalize cannabis for recreational use. In 2021, alone, five states moved legislation to legalize cannabis for recreational use. With each passing year, more states are legalizing, and it is time for Maryland to decide our future and determine if we will move forward on legalization.

HB 1 lets the voters of Maryland decide – for ourselves – at the ballot box this coming November, whether we shall join the ranks of the other 18 states, or if we will continue to criminalize cannabis use at the State level.

The position of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO is to support the legalization of cannabis. We believe that doing so will reduce the stress on our criminal justice system, allowing for more resources to be used to prevent and mitigate serious crimes. We also know that it will provide much needed revenues to the state to meet the needs of Maryland's residents.

However, regardless of labor's support for legalization, it should be up to the voters to decide whether or not we move forward. It is time to put the legalization of cannabis on the ballot and give Marylanders the choice.

For these reasons we ask for a favorable report on HB 1.

WDC Testimony HB0001-2022_FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: Holly Syrrakos

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

**House Bill 0001 - Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession
Judiciary Committee – February 14, 2022
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning a priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of HB0001 calling for a referendum on the legalization of cannabis use and possession for individuals 21 and older. We fully anticipate that the referendum will pass given that a February 2021 Goucher poll found that two-thirds of Maryland residents support legalization of recreational cannabis use.

Women are more likely than men to be incarcerated for a drug offense. Twenty-six percent of women in prison have been convicted of a drug offense, compared to 13% of men in prison. The proportion of imprisoned women convicted of a drug offense has increased from 12% in 1986 to 26% in 2018.¹

Our primary reasons for supporting the bill are the disproportionate impact of drug laws on people of color, the beneficial impact of cannabis use for some people, and the increased safety and increased revenue that comes from legalization.

1. Maryland cannabis laws have had a disproportionate impact on Black Marylanders

- A large number of marijuana possession charges are made as a result of traffic stops. Forty-one percent of all traffic stops in Maryland between 2016 and 2020 involved African-Americans who represent only 31% of the total population.
- According to "[A Tale of Two Countries](#)," a 2020 ACLU research report, even though Black people only represent 60% of Baltimore City's population, between 2018-2019, 96% of all marijuana possession charges were filed against Black people in the city.
- Women of color have been particular victims of current drug policy. "Drug use and drug selling occur at similar rates across racial and ethnic groups, yet black and Latina women are far more likely to be criminalized for drug law violations than white women. Black women are almost twice as likely – and Latinas are more than 20 percent as likely – to be incarcerated than white women."²

¹ "Incarcerated Women and Girls," The Sentencing Project, 2020 report

² "Women, Prison and the Drug War," Drug Policy Alliance, May 2018



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

2. Legalization will allow Maryland to regulate and better control the strength and quality of cannabis.

- Regulation allows for control. Prohibition guarantees that cannabis will **not be** tested for purity and potency, creating the risk of contamination by dangerous pesticides, molds, bacteria, or even lacing.
- Maryland can benefit from the experience of **18 other states** that have already legalized recreational cannabis use, including seven in the past two years and two that have a decade's worth of experience with implementation and regulation.

3. Legalization will create new revenue streams for necessary public health initiatives and redress the inequities caused by the war on drugs.

- A 2022 report by the Marijuana Policy Project found that states that have legalized recreational cannabis use collected more than \$10 billion in cannabis tax revenue. This revenue can, and should be, directed toward social programs.

HB0001 allows the voting public of Maryland to decide whether to legalize cannabis for adult consumption. This is a truly democratic step forward and one that has the potential to begin to alleviate the societal damage caused by the "War on Drugs."

We commend the Democratic Party leadership in Maryland for stepping out in front to stop the biased effects of anti-cannabis legislation and bring equity in a new and growing industry.

We ask for your support for HB0001 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President

Jen Brock-Cancelliri - Trulieve - FAV

Uploaded by: Jen Brock-Cancelliri

Position: FAV



Testimony HB 1: Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession

Position: SUPPORT

Judiciary Committee

February 14, 2022

Dear Chair Clippinger and members of the Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of Trulieve, I respectfully urge a favorable vote on HB 01, giving the choice of legalizing adult use cannabis to Maryland voters.

Trulieve is an industry leading, vertically integrated cannabis company and multi-state operator in the U.S. operating in 11 states, with leading market positions in Arizona, Florida, and Pennsylvania. Our recent acquisition of Harvest Health expands our footprint in the northeast with additional affiliated facilities in Pennsylvania and entry into Maryland with our dispensaries in Halethorpe, Rockville, and Towson as well as our processing and cultivation facility in Hancock. By providing innovative, high-quality products across its brand portfolio, Trulieve delivers optimal customer experiences and increases access to cannabis, helping patients and customers to live without limits.

We look forward to working with the Maryland General Assembly and regulators to combine HB 1 with legislation that charts an equitable path to adult recreational cannabis in partnership with existing businesses. For example, in other markets, we have created equity and ownership partnerships that have allowed us to couple local community members with industry expertise to create an equitable and well-rounded cannabis marketplace.

We thank Chair Clippinger for his leadership on this bill and look forward creating hundreds more family supporting wage jobs as the cannabis industry expands across Maryland.

Lauren Niehaus
Director of Government Relations
Lauren.Niehaus@trulieve.com
303.827.9039

UFCW Local 27 Testimony on HB 1 - 2022 0214.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Hack

Position: FAV



WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 837

Constitutional Amendment – Cannabis – Adult Use and Possession

February 14, 2022
Judiciary Committee
Maryland House

TO: Hon. Luke Clippinger, Chair,
Hon. Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Vice-Chair, and
Members of the Committee

FR: Jason Chorpenning
President, United Food & Commercial Workers International Union Local 27
21 West Road, Towson, MD 21204

Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Moon and Members of the Committee, on behalf of the 23,000 working men and women represented by United Food & Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 27, I am submitting testimony in support of HB 1.

The UFCW Local 27 is proud to represent the hard-working men and women in retail food, food processing, manufacturing, distribution, gaming, health care, cannabis and other industries.

Nationally, UFCW represents over 1.3 million hard-working men and women who work in highly regulated industries including the emerging legal cannabis industry. Our cannabis members can be found across multiple states in growing and cultivating facilities, manufacturing, and processing facilities, and in laboratories and dispensaries, including in Maryland.

UFCW Local 27 supports this legislation that will allow Marylanders to vote in favor of allowing adults in the state to use and possess cannabis.


Recently polling has shown that Marylanders attitude toward cannabis has been changing with over 60% now supporting legalization. This is consistent with national trends as well; currently 18 states and the District of Columbia permit the recreational use of cannabis.

In addition, this legislation will address the disproportionate negative impact criminalization of cannabis has had on communities of color. As the Racial Equity Impact Note shows: African Americans, or people identified as Black, are twice as likely to be arrested for marijuana possession as compared to their proportion of the State's population.

This legislation is consistent with the attitude of Marylanders, helps address long-stand racial inequality and promotes criminal justice reform.

I urge the Committee to SUPPORT HB 1.

In Solidarity,


Jason Chorpenning

2-14-2022 Draft - HB1 - Constitutional Amendment -

Uploaded by: Justin Hayes

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY OF COMPTROLLER PETER FRANCHOT

Support - House Bill 1 - Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession

Judiciary Committee

February 14, 2022

Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chairman Moon and members of the Committee, it is my pleasure to provide testimony in **support of House Bill 1 - Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession**. I would like to thank Delegate Luke Clippinger for sponsoring this important legislation, the Committee for providing the opportunity for my testimony to be heard, and the House Cannabis Referendum and Legalization Workgroup for its hard work on this crucial issue.

It is time for Maryland to join 18 other states around the country, as well as the District of Columbia and the U.S. Territory of Guam in legalizing cannabis for adult use. I'm especially pleased that this bill requires the voters to have a say in this important question via statewide referendum, and I am confident that this issue will be decided favorably by the will of the people. In survey after survey, the consensus is clear - the people of Maryland have decided that the criminalization of cannabis is wrong, it is an example of outdated thinking, and it has cost too many people too much to continue any longer.

The evidence is clear that the prohibition on cannabis has disproportionately affected Black communities in our State. For example, although White Marylanders are statistically *more* likely to *use* cannabis (55%), Black Marylanders (in 2020) were 50% more likely to be *arrested* for cannabis (59%) than Whites (39%) - and this despite the overall population of Maryland being less than 30% Black. This clear disparity in the harms suffered from decades of prohibition shows the evidence why any framework of legalized cannabis in Maryland must include reparative justice, social equity, and community reinvestment from the outset.

The legalization of cannabis in Maryland must contribute to economic growth in communities that have disproportionately borne the brunt of enforcement for cannabis-related offenses. Maryland should lead the nation in participation for our Minority-Owned Businesses, and it is vital that we avoid creating any roadblocks in the licensing and regulatory process for that to occur.

Socio-economic disparities do not fix themselves on their own. They require thoughtful, deliberate, and proactive policy action to address them. We must level the playing field for Black Marylanders – and legalizing cannabis the right way, with equity at the forefront, must be a part of that effort.

As the agency charged with ensuring proper taxation and compliance of cannabis sales, the Office of the Comptroller stands ready and is committed to working with you and all the members of the General Assembly to create a strong, sound, and fair taxation statutory and regulatory framework. It is our sincere hope that the General Assembly will give careful consideration to feedback and suggestions provided by my senior leadership team, as the creation of a cannabis tax will impact ongoing and future agency operations, including our ongoing tax system modernization project known as COMPASS.

For the reasons stated above, I respectfully request a **favorable report** for House Bill 1. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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HB0001 Marijuana Referendum.pdf

Uploaded by: Marilyn Mosby

Position: FAV



February 10, 2022

Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chair, Judiciary
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for HB0001 Constitutional Amendment – Cannabis – Adult Use and Possession

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Committee Members:

As the State's Attorney for Baltimore City, I strongly support HB0001 which allows for a referendum on the 2022 ballot to decide whether marijuana should be legalized. In January of 2019, my office joined a growing number of prosecutors nationally who no longer prosecute low-level cannabis cases. After a great deal of research and studying best practices across the nation, my office determined that there is no public safety value in the prosecution of cannabis, it's counterproductive to the limited resources that are available to law enforcement, and the discriminatory enforcement of these laws has exacerbated public trust among communities of color and the law enforcement communities that serve them.

Jailing people for cannabis possession is a vast and ongoing moral failure. Evidence shows that cannabis legalization is working across the United States. States that have legalized cannabis are not only saving money and protecting the public by comprehensively regulating cannabis for adult use, but profiting through the regulation of cannabis.

It must also be realized that legalization of marijuana must be accompanied by measures to correct the errors of the past and address the harms that marijuana criminalization has had on in particular Black communities. Evidence shows that racial and ethnic groups across the nation use marijuana at similar rates, but arrest data indicates that Black people are disproportionately and disparately impacted by arrests or incarceration for marijuana possession. In the city of Baltimore, prior to the decriminalization of 10 grams or less of marijuana, Black people were six times more likely to be arrested for the possession of marijuana. While many had hoped that decriminalization would offer a respite to communities of color, to the dismay of poor Black and Brown people, those flagrant racial disparities continued to exist in my city even after the decriminalization of less than 10 grams of marijuana to a civil infraction. In 2017, 95% of the citations issued by the Baltimore Police Department were issued to Black people and shockingly, 42% of the citations issued city-wide were issued in a singled district out of nine that cover the city, the Western District, which is where 95% of the residents in this District are Black and disproportionately impoverished.

STATE'S ATTORNEY
Marilyn J. Mosby



OFFICE of the STATE'S ATTORNEY for BALTIMORE CITY
120 East Baltimore Street | Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Understanding that racial injustice and discriminatory enforcement of these laws have led to legal, social, and economic marginalization of not just individuals but whole communities, I implore you to accompany marijuana legalization with programming that works to rectify the “wrongs of the past and present” by assuring funding to communities that have had to bear the brunt of the disparate impact marijuana criminalization created. Legalization of marijuana comes with a moral responsibility to ensure that racial and social justice are addressed. In addition to legalizing cannabis, there must be reinvestment in communities affected by the war on drugs and the need for an equitable and diverse marketplace; by providing local job training, re-entry, legal aid, literacy, youth mentoring and health education programs for communities most harmed by the war on drugs.

Since 2012, 18 states and the District of Columbia have legalized the personal use of cannabis for adults. Clearly, it's time that the state of Maryland do the same. I strongly urge a favorable report on HB0001. Taxation and regulation of cannabis is successful throughout the county and will only benefit Maryland by providing revenue and increased access to jobs for residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Marilyn J. Mosby
State's Attorney for Baltimore City

HB0001_Nicholas_DeTello.pdf

Uploaded by: Nicholas DeTello

Position: FAV

Nicholas DeTello

HB0001 Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use and Possession

Favorable

2/14/2022

I am a student, Eagle Scout, family man, as well as a Civil Rights Enthusiast. I have voted independently, I am currently registered as a Libertarian, and I have a diverse set of views (some left, some right). These include but are not limited to: equality, limiting abuse of police power, protection of minority groups (such as my direct LGBT family) and decriminalization of victimless crimes (drug possession, gun possession, exercising civil rights, etc.). I am also related to victims of our cyclic incarceration system and have friends/family who have suffered under the current prohibition of Cannabis; for these reasons I urge a favorable report of House Bill 0001.

Too often I find myself testifying *against* bills in Annapolis; this is usually due to proposed bills being used as tools to enhance the overreach of already far too-powerful Law Enforcement Agencies. I would testify the same way even if it was overreach in Austin, Texas or Phoenix, Arizona. Many of the answers to the problems in this country are not solved by giving police **more** ways to arrest and jail citizens. Often the opposite is true; officer badge cams, repealing qualified immunity, decriminalization of victimless crimes, and favoring rehabilitation over incarceration are all positives in my book. That's exactly why this bill is so important; I strongly support empowering citizens and taking harsh/unnecessary laws off the books.

Just this last year there were many calls to reform police authority; now is the perfect opportunity to act on the will of the people, and for many of you to fulfill your campaign promises. Per the below link there are over 18,000 imprisoned in Maryland, many for victimless crimes made-up by overly zealous crime bills (i.e. drug possession, gun possession, etc.):

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/prison-population-by-state>

Why is it we're jailing users of commonly possessed substances, inanimate objects incapable of doing harm on their own? By continuing to bow to Federal regulations, we are giving full reign to 3 letter agencies such as the DEA, ICE, and ATF to abuse our state-level LEOs, leading to unfair and unjust enforcement on all levels of government. By taking a stand against this prohibition, this victimless crime, Maryland could spearhead efforts to cut down on prison populations, abuse of police power, and government overreach.

Speaking personally on this bill, I have friends and family who have consumed cannabis, several of which have been through our criminal justice systems. One of the most serious issues with criminalizing victimless crimes, is that those near or below the poverty level, or the less privileged, are the most likely to be caught and prosecuted. Someone living in Baltimore City, perhaps in an over-policed area, is far more likely to be jailed for drugs, guns, or other object-based crime-laws, over someone living in rural Carroll County, or western Maryland. I believe passing this bill would level the playing field, truly improving equality in this state.

I find it reprehensible that Cannabis is considered a Schedule 1 drug, often tied directly to one's constitutional rights, on any level of government. Any other controlled substance is deemed "OK" if it is prescribed by a doctor. Often substances that are far more lethal, or dangerous than cannabis are easily attainable under far less risk of imprisonment (as it should be). In the 1920's we had a prohibition on alcohol, and history proved this to be folly. Now that prohibition is repealed, you don't see alcohol dealers peddling on street corners; you don't see gangs competing in a black market over Moonshine. Clearly de-regulating, decriminalizing, and rehabilitating your constituents is ideal.

To conclude, there are many reasons to vote **favorably** on **this** bill (and **unfavorably** on **others**). This bill would end an unfair prohibition on a commonly used substance, it would empower citizens *instead* of strengthening an already too-powerful police-state, and it would bring equality to your constituents.

For these reasons I urge you to vote favorably on House Bill 0001.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas DeTello". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small "D" and "T" in the middle of the last name.

Nicholas DeTello

2422 Clydesdale Rd, Finksburg, MD 21048

ndetello@hotmail.com

HB1-MdPHA-FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Raimee Eck

Position: FWA



Mission: To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy **Vision:** Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities

HB 1 Cannabis Referendum

Hearing Date: 2/14/22

Committee: Judiciary

Position: Favorable with amendments

Chairperson Clippinger and members of the Judiciary Committee: The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) would like to offer favorable testimony with amendments regarding HB 1.

We recommend extending the timeline to full legalization an additional year to July 1, 2024. At a minimum, in order to appropriately establish a baseline data surveillance system, in addition to the time required to establish a well-informed regulatory system and avoid unintentional consequences additional time will be necessary.

The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) is a nonprofit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education, advocacy, and collaboration. We support public policies consistent with our vision of healthy Marylanders living in healthy, equitable, communities. MdPHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a nearly 145-year-old professional organization dedicated to improving population health and reducing the health disparities that plague our state and our nation.

Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Alexander Kahan

Position: UNF

I am writing you today to voice my unfavorable opinion towards HB1. I am a medical cannabis patient registered with the MMCC, and have been using cannabis under the supervision of multiple doctors for the past year. To be clear, I am 100% in favor of full legalization, criminal expungement, and recreational use, but I do not think HB1 is the fair and equitable way.

Without the legalization of personal cultivation of cannabis, this bill will do nothing more than line the pockets of corporations already selling cannabis for profit in the state of Maryland. These companies do not have the consumer's best interest in mind; their main goal is to make a profit, just like every other business in this country. By restricting patient and consumer access to cannabis grown by companies, you are effectively pricing out many of the consumers and patients that need cannabis the most. This bill attempts to remedy the war on cannabis by expungement and focusing on diversity, but how many low income/marginalized communities do you think can afford to pay \$65 for an amount of cannabis that would last someone just a few days? Can a plant truly be legalized if it's still a crime to plant it?

The magic of cannabis is that it is a plant that you can grow from seed, in dirt, just like every other plant that gardeners across Maryland grow. The dangers of growing cannabis are akin to the dangers of growing tomatoes. It has been cultivated globally for millennia, and grows wild in many parts of the planet.

The SB833 entitled "Cannabis – Legalization and Regulation", much better addresses the full scope of legalization, and allows for the personal cultivation of 4 plants. Please think of more than just the corporate cannabis industry when deciding on the future of such an important milestone in our state's history. The people of Maryland deserve the freedom and right to grow a legal plant in the safety of their own home.

Regards,
Alex Kahan

HB 0001 Const.Amend. and HB 0837 Cannabis Reform

Uploaded by: Ella Ennis

Position: UNF



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
Maryland Federation of Republican Women
PO Box 6040, Annapolis MD 21401
Email: eee437@comcast.net

Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chairman
and Members of the Judiciary Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: **HB 0001** – Constitutional Amendment to Legalize Adult Use of Cannabis – **OPPOSED**
HB 0837 – Cannabis Reform – **OPPOSED**

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Committee Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women strongly opposes HB 0001 Constitutional Amendment to Legalize Adult Use of Cannabis and HB 0837 that would legalize adult use and possession of 2.5 ounces of cannabis (marijuana) and remove criminal penalties currently in law.

Marijuana is a gateway drug to more powerful and deadly drugs. Its potency (the amount of THC in marijuana, the ingredient that produces the high) has been increasing steadily since the 1970s – 20-25% THC today compared to less than 2% in the 1970s. Stronger marijuana is more addictive. Daily use can cause paranoia and lead to violence. More frequent use can increase the violence 4-5 times.

A report by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) states that the number of young people who believe regular marijuana use is risky is decreasing, and surmises that legalization could continue that trend. Research has shown that marijuana can impact brain development, resulting in impairment of thinking, memory and learning functions.¹

The brain continues to develop until about age 25. Toxicology reports from Colorado, where marijuana is legal, revealed that marijuana was the most common substance found in teenagers who died by suicide in 2020. There was a 25% increase in suicides among Colorado veterans compared to the prior two years.

Maryland has a severe addiction problem with large numbers of people losing their lives every year to overdoses. We see no benefit from the legalization of marijuana. Please give HB 0001 and HB 0837 an **UNFAVORABLE** Report.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman

1. <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana>

HB 0001.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Reichert-Price

Position: UNF

Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
and Members of The House Judiciary Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: HB 0001-Constitutional Amendment-Cannabis-Adult Use and Possession- **OPPOSE**

Dear Delegate Clippinger and Members of The Committee,

There are many cons to legalization of Adult-Use Marijuana involving health and public safety, most of which are self-explanatory. Listed below are the two main reasons I urge a vote for an UNFAVORABLE report for HB0001:

- The United States has signed International Treaties that prevent us from legalizing marijuana. Three UN treaties set world-wide drug controls. As a party to this, the United States has agreed to limit the use of marijuana “exclusively to medical and scientific purposes.” Legalizing marijuana puts the United States in a position of weakness when we need to hold other nations accountable to legal agreements.
- Growing marijuana harms the environment. Cannabis plants require almost double the amount of water as other vegetation needed to grow. Using water for cannabis growth, reduces the water available for agriculture (food) and threatens wildlife species. On the other hand, legal indoor growing of marijuana requires a large amount of electricity for lighting, heating, and ventilation. This produces an amount of greenhouse gas emissions equal to that of three million cars each year. Ironically, **HB 0171- Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act, set for hearing on 2/15/2022 in the Economic Matters and Environmental and Transportation Committees,** proposes an **exponential reduction** of statewide greenhouse gas emissions, “so that after 2040, statewide greenhouse gas emissions are net negative...” **These are conflicting pieces of legislature!**

Therefore, I ask that you vote UNFAVORABLE for HB 0001-Constitutional Amendment-Cannabis- Adult Use and Possession.

Thank you for your time,

Sarah Price (ACRWC)
221 Miller Street
Westernport, MD

cannabis_833_testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Warren (Rusty) Carr

Position: UNF

HB1 Testimony in Opposition

SB692 legalizes cannabis on July 1, 2022. We've already waited many years for the State of Maryland to repeal the prohibition of cannabis. We have a moral obligation to correct the injustice of prohibition without any further delay. Continuing arrests for another year is unconscionable.

Legalizing cannabis will benefit the Maryland economy in many ways including tax revenue, economic development and cost savings in criminal justice and health care. The hundreds of millions of dollars of economic damage caused by delay would be fiscal malpractice.

Medical cannabis patients need home grow to have access to their medicine at reasonable cost and have access to medicine that is not commercially practical. The average medical patient spends over \$3000 per year. Home grow can cut that expense by 80%. Delaying home grow to medical patients is heartlessly cruel.

You don't need a referendum to know that legalization of cannabis has broad public support. I urge you to work with the Senate to cross file SB0692 and enact full legalization this session, including home grow. Del. Clippinger has stated that he wants the most equitable solution implemented rapidly. We are not just on path to allowing adult use. We are repealing prohibition. Please table these bills and fully support cannabis legalization in the most rapid and most equitable manner.

#LegalizeMD!

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HB 1_MDCC_Cannabis-Adult Use & Possession_INF.pdf

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Position: INFO



MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Informational

House Bill 1

Constitutional Amendment - Cannabis - Adult Use & Possession

House Judiciary Committee

Monday, February 14, 2022

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 5,500 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic recovery and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

HB 1 is a proposed constitutional amendment that, if passed by Maryland voters, would authorize an individual that is at least 21 years of age to use and possess cannabis in the state beginning July 1, 2023, subject to the requirement that the General Assembly provide for the use, distribution, possession, regulation, and taxation of cannabis through legislation.

While the Maryland Chamber of Commerce does not have a position on the policy of the legalization of cannabis for adult use, we would like to highlight some of the concerns shared by Maryland employers and their current and expected experiences relating to adult use legalization.

A primary concern is ensuring workplace safety. Maryland employers take seriously their role in providing a safe environment and experience for their employees and customers which has been aptly demonstrated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Maryland businesses are concerned that the legalization of adult use will lead to an increase in the number of individuals using cannabis and therefore an increase in the number of individuals under the influence at work. Without an accurate and reliable way to test for impairment during a shift, employers will face an additional challenge to maintain a safe working environment. For example, when operating heavy equipment and machinery is involved, an impaired employee could endanger their life and the lives of their coworkers. Further, the issue of impairment in the workplace will have ramifications for workers' compensation claims and an employee's ability to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

Commented [EG1]: Is a position in the works? If so it would be a stronger statement to say "While the MDCC is still forming an official position on the policy..."

Commented [EG2]: Any that you can quickly mention?

Commented [AG3R2]: no specific example - they simply can't receive UI benefits if they use cannabis and aren't eligible for WC benefits if they were under the influence

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An additional concern voiced by Maryland employers is the impact a rise in the use of cannabis may have on workforce eligibility, particularly during such a challenging labor market. Maryland is home to many federal government contractors and small businesses that provide services to the federal government and federal installations. Many employers in these industries already face the challenge of finding qualified job candidates that must maintain a drug free lifestyle, as required by the federal government. Maryland's legalization of cannabis for adult use could stand to further winnow that eligible labor pool, resulting in a detrimental impact on many Maryland employers.

Finally, we have concern over the language used in the proposed Constitutional Amendment question. By only asking if Maryland citizens favor the legalization of adult-use, it leaves out the entire possession side of the policy.

Many Maryland employers are already experiencing these challenges since the legalization of medical cannabis in 2014. While these discrepancies will continue to exist without federal action on cannabis, we ask that you please consider the concerns of the Maryland business community when making this very important policy decision.

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce appreciates your consideration of our comments on **HB 1**.

