

## **Testimony for the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Thursday, February 2nd, 2023**

### **SB 51 - Criminal Procedure - Reasonable Suspicion and Probable Cause - Cannabis**

#### **FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and committee members,

My name is Treanna Cobb. I work at the U.S. Census Bureau for the National Crime Victimization Survey. I am currently a master's student at the University of California Irvine, studying Criminology, Law & Society. I attended the University of Maryland – College Park for undergrad and received two bachelor's degrees in Criminal Justice and Information Science. I currently reside in Calvert County, MD with my parents and younger siblings. I am someone with a stake in the community and I have people who love and care for me.

One night I was driving to my boyfriend's house after picking up my sushi for dinner. It was late and Route 4 was empty. I was impatient I can't lie, so I turned down Plum Point Rd to make a U-turn and go back to Route 4. A sheriff's car was down the road, I didn't see him, and pulled me over for making an illegal turn, which was understandable. After giving me the ticket, he puts his head in the car to sniff around – "Do you have marijuana in the car" he asked. "No, I don't but my friends smoked in here a few days ago" I replied. That wasn't sufficient for him. He told me he had to search the vehicle – It was at this point I felt myself having a panic attack. All that went through my mind as he said those words were the videos of black people being pinned down to the ground with guns aimed at them that I was seeing all summer. I wasn't assuming this would be my fate, but a lot of individuals don't think they could be next...until they are.

From here, he tells me to wait in the car because he needs to call for backup. I'm confused as to why that is, so I ask. He tells me it's because he doesn't have a partner and its procedure, or something. I can't recall how long it took until backup arrived but there were 3 Sherriff cars AND the State Trooper. At this point I feel like crying. I'm not a criminal. All these officers were not necessary. As I get out the car, I'm standing next to the State Trooper. I feel dumb but I start talking to him about being a Terp and the work that I do. My goal was to just humanize myself in his eyes. The whole ordeal lasted about 90 mins. A complete waste of my time because they found no illegal substances. I wasn't traumatized but the experience, but it did not help my anxiety. Based on my own experience, the smell of weed should have not required all of this. One look at me and it was clear I was not high or doing drugs at the time. A simple traffic stopped turn into so much more. As a result, I got a civil in addition the ticket I received at the beginning of the interaction.

I support Bill 51 because as Maryland is legalizing marijuana this summer, I want to ensure my black brothers and sisters are protected as much as they can. We are all aware that black people are big consumers of marijuana and Bill 51 will add an additional layer of protection when it comes to police interactions.