

## **Supporting SB1009**

Greetings, Senators and interested parties.

I'm writing in support of Senate Bill 1009, which would establish a task force regarding natural psychedelic substances. I've been a resident of Baltimore, Maryland for 25 years and work as a social worker in the field of brain injury. I am also a founding member of the Baltimore Psychedelic Society (BPS), which has a membership of over 2000 individuals. I was first introduced to psychedelics by way of Johns Hopkins Psilocybin Research in 2010. I speak both for myself and those whose stories I've heard in my work with BPS. These are stories of hope, healing and freedom that reflect the remarkable nature of psychedelics and their capacities. If one would but listen to these firsthand accounts, their perspective on psychedelics would change dramatically.

My own experience at Hopkins would change the course of my life toward one of greater meaning and aligned purpose. Coming out of a divorce and feeling demoralized and psychologically stuck at age 50, the psychedelic experience provided visions and messages that cut right to the core of my psyche and offered renewed possibilities. A primary vision was that of my father, who I had suddenly lost at age 10, showing up in my consciousness, realer than real. His felt presence, a deeply perceived embrace, and his beautiful words to me left an indelible mark that brought great closure to a long-held wound. And, more importantly, realigned my being toward a life well-lived, as I followed his words to me: "Mark, don't hide...go seek". Fourteen years later, this experience continues to serve as a north star.

So, I fully support this current approach to bringing psychedelics into the mainstream by way of a fully representative task force. These are powerful substances that require careful and robust consideration before deciding on how they should be introduced to the general populace. The current laws serve only to keep a masterful tool like this out of reach for millions of people who can benefit. May we find a way to introduce psychedelic care safely, securely, and optimally to the people of Maryland. Given its proven ability to positively impact depression, anxiety, addiction, PTSD and other mental health conditions...  
IT IS TIME!

Let's bring the best to Maryland. Take good care.

Mark Huslage, LCSW-C