



Wednesday, February 21, 2024

The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 548 – Task Force on Responsible Use of Natural Psychedelic Substances - Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk -

House Bill 548 (HB0548), establishes a task force to study the responsible use of natural psychedelic substances. This task force is tasked with studying and making recommendations in a report to the General Assembly on or before December 15, 2025. As introduced, a seat on this task force is allocated to the Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA). The MCA supports the efforts, research, and report outlined in HB0548 and proposes two technical amendments for the Committee's consideration.

First, as introduced, the task force is to be staffed by the Maryland Department of Health. The MCA understands that the Department may not be in a position to staff the task force over the next year. If this is the case, MCA believes that it is well positioned to staff and support the task force. The MCA led the State's recent transition from a medical cannabis program to the adult-use program and has the necessary experience in developing regulatory frameworks for substances that have previously been banned, restricted, or otherwise highly regulated under federal and State law. The MCA would request that the Committee consider, on page 3, in line 9, striking "Maryland Department of Health" and substituting with "Maryland Cannabis Administration".

Second, as introduced, HB0548 allocates the MCA's position on the task force to the "Executive Director of the Maryland Cannabis Administration, or the Executive Director's designee;". The Cannabis Reform Act of 2023 (Chapters 254/255 of 2023), established that the agency head of the MCA is a "Director". To properly reflect this title, the MCA would request that the Committee on page 2, in lines 8 and 9, strike each instance of "Executive".

I hope this information is useful. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact me at (410) 487-8069 or william.tilburg@maryland.gov or Andrew Garrison, Chief of the Office of Policy and Government Affairs at (443) 844-6114 or andrew.garrison@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Tilburg". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a long, horizontal flourish.

Will Tilburg, JD, MPH
Acting Director, Maryland Cannabis Administration

cc: Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee