

Scott Williams Testimony

Supporting HB0548

Good afternoon Health and Government Operations Committee and distinguished staff.

My name is Scott Williams. I've been a Maryland resident for 22 years and own a home in District 30A. I am here to testify in support of HB548 in its current format. I first want to thank all Delegate sponsors for their leadership in bringing this bill to help solve our mental health crisis.

Quick background on me: I had a neglected childhood, moved out at 15 and homeless by 19.

After hearing I was going to be a father, it motivated me to get computer training and move to DC and start a lucrative IT career during the dot com boom. Despite all this improvement, I was miserable, suffering from major depression and suicidal ideation from years of childhood trauma. Over the next two decades I met with dozens of psychiatrists, psychologists, and therapists looking for relief without success.

About 5 years ago, at wits end, I temporarily moved to Hawaii hoping that might help. After two weeks I found no improvement, crying in bed all day thinking about suicide to end my suffering. As a last ditch effort I started researching alternative therapies unavailable in the US and came across Psilocybin, also known as magic mushrooms. Which just so happens to grow naturally in Hawaii. The morning after taking my first 200mg microdose, I woke up and noticed a 180 degree difference in ambition and mental clarity to the point I started singing in the shower like I won the lottery. That was the day I saved my own life.

For the next 6 months I took a dose every third day to ensure it was effective but not build a tolerance. Since then I only take it a couple times a month now that my serotonin levels have balanced. Let me be clear, when I microdose at this level, I have zero impairment. In fact, I have increased my focus, motivation and productivity at work.

I'm also happy to report I've had little to no recurring symptoms of depression in the last 5 years. I'm now retired at 45 and spend my time spreading education and awareness to pay it forward. I've educated 16 people about psychedelic medicines with a 100% success rate including 2 veterans (one of which you will hear from today)

I beg you to pass HB548 and start the process of effectively treating the 50% of Marylanders who suffer from mental illness. Thank you for your time.