



Baltimore Fire Officers Association

Local No. 964

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CHARTERED FEBRUARY 20, 1948



February 21, 2025

Maryland House Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
ATTN: Chair C.T. Wilson and Vice Chair Brian M. Crosby
SENT VIA EMAIL

RE: Support for House Bill 1408 - *Employment Discrimination – Fire and Rescue Public Safety Employees – Use of Medical Cannabis*

Dear Chair Wilson and Esteemed Members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1408, titled *Employment Discrimination – Fire and Rescue Public Safety Employees – Use of Medical Cannabis*. This legislation represents a significant step forward in ensuring fairness, compassion, and respect for those who serve our communities with dedication and bravery.

The proposed bill rightly prohibits employers from taking discriminatory actions against fire and rescue public safety employees who use medical cannabis, provided they possess a valid written certification. These dedicated professionals often face physical and emotional challenges that may necessitate medical treatment options like cannabis, which has been proven to provide relief for various medical conditions.

This bill acknowledges that medical cannabis use, under proper medical supervision, should not be grounds for disciplinary action, termination, or discrimination. By safeguarding employment protections, HB 1408 ensures that qualified and capable employees are not unfairly penalized for managing their health responsibly and legally.

Importantly, the bill also includes safeguards that allow employers to uphold high safety standards. It explicitly permits policies that prevent employees from working while impaired or

using medical cannabis within 12 hours before their shifts. This balance respects both the well-being of employees and the critical need for public safety.

Passing HB 1408 would demonstrate Maryland's commitment to supporting the health and rights of its public safety personnel, who risk their lives daily to protect our communities. I urge you and your colleagues to support this essential legislation and return a favorable report.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to justice and fairness.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua L. Fannon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Joshua L. Fannon, President
IAFF Local 964 Baltimore Fire Officers