

MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY



February 10, 2025

The Honorable C.T. Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
231 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support –House Bill 12: Cannabis - Sale and Distribution - Tetrahydrocannabinol Offenses

Dear Chairman Wilson and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS and WPS represent over 1100 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

This bill brings under the jurisdiction of the Maryland Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission (ATCC) certain cannabis products (delta-8, delta-10-THC derived from hemp) that currently exist in a legal gray zone because of loopholes in federal and state laws. As a result, these products (which are psychoactive similarly to delta-9-THC, with the same potential risks) are widely sold in convenience stores, gas stations, and online with no restrictions on packaging or labeling. Under this bill, the ATCC could set packaging and labeling requirements for such products, issue fines for violations and confiscate or destroy products in violation of the requirements. Similar provisions already apply to cannabis products produced and sold within Maryland's licensed cannabis industry.

These currently unregulated cannabis products may contain unlabeled harmful contaminants and byproducts of processing and concentrations of THC greater than those allowed in licensed cannabis products. Their packaging and labeling may appeal to those under 21 years, which is prohibited by regulations governing licensed cannabis products. In short, this bill extends to certain gray market cannabis products the same sound public health restrictions that already apply to the licensed cannabis market. This protects the public health of all Marylanders, but especially adolescents and youth.

For these reasons, the Maryland Psychiatric Society urges an favorable report on HB 12.

If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact MPS lobbyist, Lisa Harris Jones at lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society and the Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee

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