

March 19, 2025

The Honorable Joseline Pena-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 222 - Public Health – Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council – Membership

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports Senate Bill 222 as an important addition to public health discussions as it relates to impaired driving.

Senate Bill 222 adds the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) Administrator, or designee, to the Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council that was established in 2023. This Council's role is to promote public health, mitigation of youth use, and data collection/reporting of recreational cannabis use, just to name a few areas of its focus.

A traffic safety expert brings specialized knowledge and experience essential for addressing the complex challenges of cannabis use and impaired driving. Inclusion as a representative to the Council of such an expert carries many benefits for public health. First, a traffic safety expert can provide insight into the risks associated with driving under the influence of cannabis, including reaction times, judgment, and coordination. That expert can contribute to developing effective regulations aimed at reducing impaired driving incidents, including strategies for enforcement, education and prevention. Traffic safety experts can interpret data related to cannabis-impaired driving and help the council make informed decisions based on evidence. Finally, the expert's input can contribute to overall public safety by developing strategies to mitigate risks associated with road safety.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant Senate Bill 222 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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