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Legislative District 24
Prince George's County

Finance Committee
Chair, Rules Committee

Joint Committees

Children, Youth, and Families
Ending Homelessness
Fair Practices and State Personnel Oversight
Management of Public Funds

Chair, Prince George's County
Senate Delegation



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Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson
SB 953- Medical Cannabis- Dispensary Grower- Processor License

Good afternoon Madam Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee. Senate Bill 953- Medical Cannabis- Dispensary Grower- Processor License seeks to establish a new dispensary grower-processor license within the State's medical cannabis program. A dispensary grower-processor license would grant existing medical cannabis dispensary owners that meet the requirements, the opportunity to act as a grower, processor, and dispensary.

This bill is a simple matter of fairness. We have women and minority small business that are going out of business if we don't act. This bill will not dramatically affect the current growers and processors- we simply need medicine in the marketplace to meet the demand. There is currently a shortage of medical cannabis and patients are forced to suffer since the price of their medical cannabis has not come down.

With Senate Bill 953, we are simply seeking to create a new dispensary grower-processor license category that will allow individuals who **already** hold a medical cannabis dispensary license and who only have interest in or control of only one dispensary, the opportunity to apply for this new dispensary grower-processor license.

This bill will positively impact small businesses that have already been vetted through the Natalie M. LaPrade Medical Cannabis Commission and are doing the right things in the program.

We have to help them and help them now. We always intended for there to be more than 15 growers and processors and this bill will address this need.

Thus, I urge the committee for a favorable report for SB 953.