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Judicial Proceedings Committee

Vice Chair, Baltimore County
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable William C. Smith
2 East Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

RE: SB 218 – Crimes Involving Controlled Dangerous Substances – Penalties – Methamphetamine

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to introduce Senate Bill 218 which will increase the penalty for crimes involving methamphetamine.

In Maryland, we have seen more and more Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine cases. Due to the fact that Methamphetamine is considered a stimulant, the penalty is only 5 years for felony Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine, similar to the charge for Marijuana. This simply does not make sense, as Methamphetamine is a highly addictive and psychostimulant drug that has proven way more harmful than the effects of Marijuana. It is important to note that this bill is not intended to target users, but rather those who are importing and cooking the Methamphetamine. This importation and cooking is an extreme hazard and danger to our communities, and stricter penalties must be imposed to ensure that those who are prosecuted will not return to their old ways once released.

Senate Bill 218 will increase the penalty for Felony Possession with Intent to Distribute from 5 years to 20 years, with a maximum fine not exceeding \$15,000. This increase in penalty will be effective in deterring repeat offenders as well as deterring those who may be tempted to distribute Methamphetamine. We are not in a position to sit back and watch as drug use deteriorates our communities, and so passing this legislation will help us put our foot down and eliminate those who are distributing this terrible drug from the equation.

With all these things considered I hope you offer a favorable report on Senate Bill 218.