



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

March 4, 2021

TO: The Honorable Delores Kelley
 Chair, Finance Committee

 The Honorable Guy Guzzone
 Chair, Budget & Taxation Committee

FROM: Marc Elrich
 County Executive

RE: SB 708, Cannabis - Legalization and Regulation, Support

Senate Bill 708 would enable adult Marylanders to use and possess a limited amount of cannabis for personal, non-medical use. The bill includes important provisions to automatically expunge any records of possession of cannabis incurred before October 1, 2022 that would have otherwise been permitted under Senate Bill 708 if it had been enacted at the time of the charges, and to allow any person incarcerated for possession, cultivating, processing or sale of cannabis to apply for resentencing. The bill also provides for the Cannabis Education and Training Fund, the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund, and the Social Equity Start-Up Fund, which are meaningful tools that will enable individuals and communities previously adversely impacted by the criminalization of cannabis to participate in the legal cannabis economy.

In addition to creating a new industry within the state and paths to participate in it for many Marylanders who have historically been harmed by the criminalization of cannabis, Senate Bill 708 also enables the State and local jurisdictions to generate revenue from sales and use taxes and excise taxes. At a time when the economic future of the State and local governments is uncertain and the needs of our citizens are arguably greater than ever before, a revenue stream with potential to have a significant impact on our ability to serve Marylanders should not be ignored. The need for increased revenue across the State is great and this bill is a meaningful way to help meet the need.

The Montgomery County Executive supports Senate Bill 708 and respectfully urges the Committee to issue a favorable report.

cc: Members of the Finance Committee
 Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee