



March 9, 2021

The Honorable Delores Kelley
Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Vice Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support SB 884: Medical Cannabis - Visiting Qualifying Patients

Dear Chair Kelley and Vice Chair Feldman:

On behalf of Americans for Safe Access, the oldest and largest national organization of patients, medical professionals, scientists and concerned citizens promoting safe and legal access to cannabis for therapeutic use and research, I am writing to urge support for SB 884 - *Medical Cannabis - Visiting Qualifying Patients*.

Despite the fact that 36 states have reformed their laws to provide for safe and legal access to cannabis for qualifying patients, patients traveling across these states as well as those who have not reformed their laws on cannabis still face a confusing system of federal and state laws regarding safe and legal access to cannabis. A patient may live in a state that authorizes possession and use of medical cannabis, but travel to a state that does not permit visiting patients to secure safe and legal access to medicine they need to treat underlying health conditions or mitigate related symptoms. Meanwhile federal law does not authorize state medical cannabis patients to travel across state lines with their cannabis medicine.

This confusing framework of laws creates significant challenges for patients who need to travel with their medication for work or pleasure. Traveling patients must choose between traveling, the ability to treat their health condition or choosing to violate federal and/or state law to travel with their medication across state lines or buy cannabis from unlicensed retailers in the state they are visiting.

To date 17 states, the District of Columbia and two U.S. territories maintain laws that permit qualified out-of-state medical cannabis patients to secure safe and legal access when visiting their states. These laws are critical to helping patients maintain legally compliant access to



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ASA is the largest national nonprofit organization of patients, medical cannabis providers, medical professionals, scientists and concerned citizens promoting safe and legal access to cannabis for therapeutic use and research with over 100,000 advocates in all 50 states.

medication they need to treat their health condition when traveling. To keep patients up-to-date on the status of state laws that permit access, possession and use for visiting patients, ASA created the [Medical Cannabis Patient's Guide for U.S. Travel](#)¹. This document provides a summary of each state reciprocity law to help patients who need to travel with their medical cannabis do so in a manner that is legally compliant. Maryland's addition to this guide would be welcome, particularly given the roughly 42 million visitors who come to Maryland each year².

Many of these visitors are patients hailing from one of 36 states or the District of Columbia with a legal medical cannabis program. And whether that medicine is a federally-compliant FDA approved product or a state-compliant cannabis product, these visiting patients maintain the same needs as Maryland patients regarding safe and legal access to it. As such Americans for Safe Access urges the Maryland Finance Committee and the Maryland General Assembly to approve SB 884.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dustin McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dustin McDonald, Interim Policy Director
Americans for Safe Access

¹ <https://www.safeaccessnow.org/travel>

² file:///C:/Users/mcdon/Downloads/https___industry.visitmaryland.org_wp-content_uploads_2020_10_Maryland_FY19_AnnualReport-Rev100220_V11.pdf