



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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SB 504 – Discrimination in Employment – Use of Medical Cannabis - Prohibition
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
February 9, 2021

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support SB 504 – Discrimination in Employment – Use of Medical Cannabis - Prohibition. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

Under current law, a person can be prescribed codeine, Percocet, and oxycontin, under the supervision of their doctor, and not face any negative consequences from their employer through discrimination. A person can drink alcohol in their free time, and still be gainfully employed, provided they are not intoxicated at work. No such protections exist for those who have received a prescription for cannabis for medical reasons.

SB 504 is a commonsense bill that brings our medical cannabis law in-line with employment law for all other prescribed medications. Medical cannabis is fluid situation, in the United States, with more States legalizing cannabis for medical use, and a growing conversation on the Federal level about decriminalization and potential legalization. In this uncertain arena, we need to make sure that we provide a level of stability for workers.

SB 504 also provides for the fluidity of cannabis law by ensuring employers are not held at fault for following federal law or regulations if their businesses depend on those regulations to operate. And, for all businesses, the bill allows for the adoption of policies and procedures that prohibit a worker from working while impaired.

We cannot support medical uses for cannabis while simultaneously allowing employers to discriminate based on its usage. With the proper protections in place for businesses, SB 504 gives stability for workers and Maryland's businesses.

We ask for a favorable vote on SB 504.