



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB0844
-Medical Cannabis - Dispensaries - Operation and Multiple Locations-
Before the Senate Finance Committee
On March 3, 2022.**

Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 844 corrects an unintentional mistake made in 2019 when regulating medical cannabis dispensaries under SB426. While the original intent was to allow holders of cannabis dispensary licenses to operate four locations under one license, the enacted law requires one license per location.

Requiring one license per location creates an undue burden on dispensary operators. Adapting the regulation to allow four dispensaries per license eliminates this burden and creates more equitable pathways for participation in the cannabis industry.

Wealth disparities create difficulty for many racial, ethnic, and gender minorities to participate independently in the cannabis industry. Allowing four dispensaries to operate under one license creates opportunities for co-managing and co-operating dispensaries, mitigating wealth disparities for minorities interested in the cannabis industry.

In addition to creating opportunities for minorities to operate cannabis-related businesses, this bill also allows for more dispensaries to be located in underserved, minority communities. This gives access to a medical treatment that is less harmful than some alternatives like opioids.

There are concerns that this bill could be injurious for independent dispensary owners. On the contrary, this legislation is intended to do just the opposite. As I mentioned, the bill actually creates increased opportunity for new independently owned dispensaries. It would also allow already existing independent owners to expand to four locations, increasing their business opportunities.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report for Senate Bill 844.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill P. Carter, Esq.