



Senate Bill 692

Cannabis – Legalization and Regulation

(Cannabis Legalization and Reparations for the War on Drugs Act)

MACo Position:

To: Finance and Budget and Taxation
Committees

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Date: March 3, 2022

From: Dominic Butchko

MACo Statement on Adult Use Cannabis Implementation

The General Assembly is considering legislation seeking to authorize adult use cannabis, or to pose that matter to the voters for their approval. On these central questions, MACo does not take any position on the central matter. Some implementation factors are of county concern, which we note here.

Local Autonomy to “Opt Out” of Facilities

Multiple states legalizing cannabis use have affirmatively created a process for a local governing body to recognize the sentiment of its residents to not authorize certain facilities within their bounds. Current Senate proposals contain such a provision. MACo urges that any implementation legislation passed retain this local authority, through the appropriate actions of a local governing body – each of which embeds procedures for public input and participation.

Appropriate Taxation Reflecting Local Needs

Maryland needs to establish not only appropriate state/local tiered regulation, but also taxation, of the products made newly legal under such legislation. Again, the experience of other states may serve as a guide on the suitable structure of excise or sales-based taxation of cannabis. Local jurisdictions will bear the primary burden of related enforcement and compliance with most such measures, and with any public safety matters arising from cannabis facilities, and should be a central component of any such tax structure.

Counties stand ready to work with the General Assembly to ensure adult use cannabis implementation aligns with these local priorities.