

February 17, 2023

The Honorable C.T Wilson, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 2140

Re: Favorable With Amendments - HB 556 - Cannabis Reform

Chairman Wilson and the Honorable Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

I am David Martin, City Council Member of Havre de Grace (“the City”) supports HB 556 with amendments. If passed, the bill would establish the needed statutory framework for the use of medical and adult-use cannabis. I respectfully request the Economic Matters Committee give HB 556 a favorable report with the following amendment.

Suggested Amendment To House Bill 556

Additional funding be provided for training of Law Enforcement Personnel to become Maryland Drug Recognition Experts. Currently the cost of DRE certification is covered by a Federal Grant from Highway Safety which covers training, lodging and related materials. The additional funding is needed to cover the manpower needed for proper staffing during the training process. DRE Pre-School (16 hours), DRE School (56 hours) DRE Field Certification (Approximately 24 hours)

The focus of the DRE curricula is on the identification of the drug impaired driver, DRE skills are applied to many different law enforcement activities, including drug interdiction enforcement. Additionally, DRE’s can be used to differentiate between drug influence and medical and/or mental disorders. The certified DRE is an exceptionally valuable tool for combating the adverse impact of drugs on the communities we serve.

Respectfully,
David Martin
Havre de Grace
City Council Member
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