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Maryland State Senate
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Maryland Senate Finance and Budget & Taxation Committees,

I am writing in full support of Senate bill 516 entitled *Cannabis Reform*. Therefore, I urge both the Finance and the Budget & Finance committees to offer a favorable report.

However, the bill can be made stronger with respect to social equity with the following amendments:

- Pages 11-12 Increase representation on the advisory board by adding 3 seats for members of trade or lobbying groups that advocate for more participation by minorities in the cannabis industry. The positions listed in lines 26-28 on page 11 and lines 1-2 on page 12 focus on cannabis consumers. But there should be representation by advocates who wish to see more minorities in the cannabis industry as producers or wealth generators (i.e. growers, processors, and dispensaries).
- Page 24 To maximize the equitable distribution of licenses, the language “individuals who have been convicted of a violation of a law criminalizing the use of cannabis” should be added as an additional criteria for becoming a Social Equity Applicant after line 18.

With these critical additions, the Cannabis Reform bill will be even stronger in its ability to help foster an equitable cannabis industry in the State of Maryland.

Sincerely,



Lawrence T. Brown, PhD, MPA
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