



Written Testimony for Nicholas Patrick
Co-Founder of The Maryland Healthy Alternatives Association

3/9/2023

Senate Finance Committee
Senator Melony Griffith, Chair
Senator Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair
SB0516 FWA

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicholas Patrick and I am a Co-Founder of the Maryland Healthy Alternatives Association which works to protect the public's access to safe alternatives to prescription medications and advocates for the hemp industry in Maryland. I am also a minority business owner of Embrace CBD Wellness Centers which has 3 retail locations in Anne Arundel and Howard County Maryland.

I write to you today as what many would define as a "dreamer", I was brought to this country as a baby, and for the majority of my life, I lived in the shadows as an undocumented immigrant. I couldn't legally work, attend college, or even drive a car for 25 years until I was granted a green card at 26 years old. I know what it's like to feel marginalized and forgotten but I always dreamed of owning my own business but I'm more than just a dreamer, I'm a doer. I worked extremely hard to build my business which supports my wife, my son, and my mother who recently lost her husband to covid. I cannot sit idly by while it is destroyed because of a lack of regulation and the greed driven overreach from the cannabis establishment. That is why we started the MHAA to protect our industry from such a threat and to work with the legislature to address the lack of a regulatory landscape by working to craft common sense regulations to protect public safety and the hemp industry participants.

I have deep concerns about the proposed language in the Cannabis Reform Act, SB0516, that aims to lower the acceptable Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol concentration below the federal threshold of 0.3% on a dry weight basis (§ 36-101 (C)(1); Page 18 line 19), and to ban "cannabinoid products not derived from naturally occurring biologically active chemical constituents" (§ 36-1103(2) (B); Page 70, lines 8-10), as well as the efforts to place a cap on

THC at 0.5mg per serving and 2.5mg per package for those without a recreational cannabis license. (§ 36-1103 (A)(1); Page 69, lines 23-27).

The Maryland hemp industry is a major industry in Maryland that contributes large amounts of tax dollars to the state from our product sales that total over \$300,000,000. We have also attached an economic impact report as part of our written testimony that further outlines the sheer size of our industry and the potential loss of revenue to the state that this legislation would cause without the proposed amendments.

The low barrier to entry into the hemp industry attracted many different types of entrepreneurs from all backgrounds, races, and genders creating a true climate of social equity in this “sister industry” to cannabis. Through our cursory research we were able to determine that 30% of all hemp specialty stores in the state identify as Black Owned and 25% of all hemp production licenses were issued to women. This is one of the most diverse communities of business owners that stands to be eradicated by this proposed legislation due to the wholesale ban on Delta 8 and the proposed THC caps. Why would we be seeking to criminalize non-intoxicating CBD products and ban hemp derived products with a psychotropic potency half that of the cannabis we are legalizing in the same bill? Why destroy social equity in an already existing industry with low barriers to entry where the diversity took shape naturally while trying to create it in another industry with much higher barriers to entry? This seems wildly unnecessary and will only hurt the small business community in our state and further discourage minority participants from owning their own businesses. If people fail in business due to bad business practices, that is something that can happen to anyone, but if people have their businesses robbed from them by overregulation or misguided policy, that can lead to utter discouragement and cause businesses to simply leave the “Free State” of Maryland.

The devastation to the small and minority owned business in the Maryland hemp industry that lowering the acceptable THC concentration in hemp products will cause will be tragic. It would cause hundreds of businesses to close and cause countless people to lose their jobs. This language as written would immediately render nearly all Full Spectrum CBD products illegal as all of them contain more than 2.5mg per package as evidenced by the certificates of analysis attached to this testimony. These COAs are representative of nearly ALL Full Spectrum CBD products that can currently be purchased in CBD specialty stores like ours as well as pharmacies, grocery stores including Whole Foods, and many hundreds of retail establishments throughout the state. This arbitrary number of 2.5mg does nothing but destroy current hemp businesses in our state and does not serve in any way to protect public safety or achieve any relevant end. It simply allows for the cannabis establishment to encroach on the rights of legal hemp businesses to further consolidate their industry as well as circumnavigate clearly written federal law. THC limits like these ought to be based in science, however this language has no scientific basis whatsoever but it only mirrors the talking points from the cannabis establishment that we in the hemp industry have heard for years which led to the formation of the MHAA.

We in the hemp industry have always been protected by federal law but now it seems that the State of Maryland wants to criminalize a long standing, federally legal industry while legalizing a federally illegal industry. Many businesses in our state have been growing hemp for CBD, processing hemp for CBD, manufacturing CBD products, and selling CBD products at retail for years now and they are all in danger of losing a key element of their businesses over arbitrary THC caps that seem to serve no relevant purpose. The federal standard for THC limits for hemp products has always been 0.3% Delta 9 THC on a dry weight basis. **We urge the legislature to amend (§ 36-1103 (A)(1); Page 69, lines 23-27) to reflect the federal standard of 0.3% on a dry weight basis** and not to change the definition of hemp in Maryland to directly or indirectly serve the greed of the cannabis establishment. Doing so would limit access to underserved communities, government employees, veterans, and everyone who relies on these products to improve the quality of their daily lives and force them to conduct business inside of a marijuana establishment that many of them likely never planned on entering. This would just simply be bad policy. Why would we criminalize Full Spectrum CBD products being sold even in places like Whole Foods, spas, and acupuncturists offices while empowering the high potency THC products that will be available in Adult Use Cannabis dispensaries? That doesn't make any sense, and so I'm sure this was not the intent of the legislature. We urge the committee to make the amendments outlined in our testimony and protect the small and minority owned businesses in Maryland.

Next I will address the further destruction of the hemp industry that would serve as the "nail in the coffin" for small and minority owned hemp businesses which is outlined in (§ 36-1103(2) (B); Page 70, lines 8-10) which refers to cannabinoid products not derived from naturally occurring biologically active chemical constituents. This language is very confusing and it's difficult to determine the intent behind it. However in our many meetings with legislators, we were told that this language takes aim at federally lawful refined hemp cannabinoid products like Delta 8, Delta 10, and HHC. This has been one of the main goals of the cannabis establishment for years now. Lies and misinformation have spread like wildfire from lobbyists for large cannabis companies that have portrayed these products to be some sort of boogeyman which they most certainly are not. We have been the victims of intentional misinformation for far too long and it is time for it to stop. We even heard that a lobbyist in Maryland had said that delta 8 products contain harmful fillers like lye. This is totally untrue, unfounded, and frankly it's ridiculous.

We understand that like any industry there are bad actors in hemp and we want to weed them out and are willing to work with the state to create a regulatory framework for these products. We have also attached to our testimony a full in-depth report on Delta 8 for the committee to review which further outlines the TRUTH about these products. Before last legislative session these products were not age-gated and were being sold irresponsibly in places like gas stations and convenience stores where minors had unfettered access to them and we were excited to

work with the legislature to age gate these products while we worked on a common sense regulatory framework.

In 2022 Senator Feldman and Delegate Pena-Melnyk created a study group led by the MMCC to conduct a comprehensive study on these products that we were, by law, meant to be an active part of. However, as expected, this study from its inception was highly weighted against the interests of the hemp industry with only 27% of participants being from the hemp industry and the other 73% having a role in the cannabis industry. Throughout the study the 2 members from our association dispelled misinformation, cited facts corroborated by the experts selected to contribute to the study, and worked with the MMCC and the other interested parties (in the limited capacity that we could) to come up with recommendations on how to properly regulate these products. Much to our surprise we agreed with most of the recommendations and were excited to finally have the regulation that our industry so desperately needed to bring legitimacy to these products and promote public safety while protecting the hemp industry's ability to participate in the free market. However now it seems that without ANY consultation from the industry participants who created these products we are now facing a total ban on the products that make up more than 70% of all hemp related sales in the state.

We understand the concerns about public safety especially when it comes to children getting ahold of Delta 8 products. That is why our plan for regulation that we have worked so hard to create is so crucial to this conversation. No, Delta 8 does not contain lye, no it does not contain harmful chemicals, no it does not cause children to die, if the product is tested by a DEA registered, ISO Certified lab and the report shows that it's clean, then it's safe for use for adults 21 and older. These products have a 40-50% less potent psychotropic effect than Delta 9 products and are purchased specifically for that reason. I urge you to please read our full report on Delta 8 and other non-Delta 9 THC isomers included in testimony from the MHAA and the Maryland Hemp Coalition.

Most people who purchase these Refined Hemp Cannabinoid products are buying them specifically because they have tremendous therapeutic benefits and do not create the long lasting intense "high" produced by adult-use cannabis. Our industry serves a different customer. In addition, the prices of these products are much less expensive than what is currently offered by the medical marijuana dispensaries and allow those who are economically disadvantaged to be able to purchase products that improve their daily lives at a fraction of the cost. We are a resource to many underserved communities.

The idea that a public health emergency will happen if Delta 8 is allowed to remain on the market is simply not true. As Maryland opens up its Adult Use Market the potential for a child to get hold of a bag of Delta 9 edibles from a dispensary will drastically increase and we as a state assume the same risk as if it were a delta 8 product except that delta 8 is a less potent, naturally occurring cannabinoid than delta 9. The solution is simple and is already thoroughly outlined in HB1204. Regulate all refined hemp cannabinoids through the ATCC. Enforce testing

requirements, labeling and packaging requirements, and create a simple and easy to access craft cannabis license for existing hemp businesses that allows for the sale of Refined Hemp Cannabinoid Products and other hemp products that do not exceed the 0.3% threshold so that the businesses offering these products can be tracked by the state for purposes of enforcement and establish penalties for breaking the rules.

Please consider the many people from every conceivable background who have built very successful businesses around these products and do not destroy their livelihoods without giving them a chance at finally being able to operate in a well-regulated hemp industry. We have the resources to do it, we have the plan in place, all we need to do is execute it. We are afraid that our very existence is threatened because of a lack of regulation that has allowed bad actors to sell untested substandard products. We do not support these businesses. We do not support the underage sale of these products. We do not support selling products that have not been tested by ISO certified, DEA registered 3rd party laboratories. We do not support any packaging that is not child resistant or is attractive to children and that is why we are begging the committee for regulation and oversight so that we can stay in business as an industry and operate responsibly. The answer is not to punish the good guys who tried their best to do the right things in an unregulated market. The answer is regulation.

A proposal attached below and titled "MDA White Paper on MGA Hemp Bills" was drafted by the MDA to establish the creation of a farm based, craft cannabis grower's license to coincide with the hemp growers license. This proposal also mentions expanding the number of licenses issued to cannabis growers to allow existing hemp farmers the option to grow cannabis when concentration levels exceed 0.3%. As with any industry a supply chain is critical to its success. The MD hemp industry is not just the farmers who grow the hemp, but also the processors, manufacturers and specialty retailers selling MD made products. If one link in the chain is removed or forgotten the whole chain becomes weaker. The proposal from the MDA for the "craft" license option does not mention the processors, manufacturers, and specialty retailers. We are asking this body to create a "Craft" licensing structure for existing hemp businesses including hemp specialty retailers with a minimum of 90% of their product sales coming from hemp products under the regulation and oversight of the newly established ATCC that would allow for these products to be regulated and sold in a manner that protects public safety and promotes the small businesses in the Maryland Hemp Industry.

We are not opposed to regulation. In fact, we welcome it. Not many industries ask the state for more regulation, but the hemp industry is begging for it. We know we need it but we cannot accept the destruction of our business, which is protected by federal law which will open the state up to unnecessary litigation. The exclusion of all tetrahydrocannabinols in hemp from the CSA, by the actions of the 2018 Farm Bill, should eliminate any question of the legality surrounding these hemp-derived cannabinoids and products (delta-8, delta-10, and other THC isomers.) Unfortunately, the adjacent medical and adult-use cannabis industry, with

conflicting economic interests, continues to spread misinformation about these products as they always have.

There is nothing within the 2018 Farm Bill that prohibits deriving Delta 8 or other THC isomers from hemp and enhancing the products with the compounds. Supporting this is a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit who stated in March 2022 in a 3-0 ruling, "this Court will not substitute its own policy judgment for that of Congress." We believe the subsequent regulatory actions should reflect the same. There is no need to have this wind up in a legal battle when we can work together to protect the public and the industry.

As the MHAA it is our duty to protect the public's access to these products. These products act as a middle ground between CBD and Cannabis and our customers purchase it specifically because it's less potent. The consumers in this state deserve to have their access to less intoxicating products protected. Michelob Ultra exists in the same industry as Jack Daniels. Why are we discussing criminalizing the beer and wine side of the cannabis industry and pushing so hard for the Jack Daniels side of it? Hemp will not be rendered obsolete during the rollout of adult-use cannabis just as beer and wine is still very profitable even though Jack Daniels is sold in the same establishments. Hemp is here to stay, and for good reason. The cannabis industry has become obsessed with constantly increasing the potency of their products and this legislation leaves no room for those consumers who cannot handle the intense "high" produced by these products. That is who the hemp industry currently serves. We can have Beer and Wine as well as Jack Daniels and Bacardi 151. There is a real need for these products and the consumers in Maryland want them as evidenced by the letters written by consumers attached to this testimony.

My wife and I started Embrace CBD Wellness Centers with our life savings of only \$8000 and today after 4 years of work our business has grown to three locations and over \$1.3 million in annual sales. We are proud to offer science backed educational resources and quality controlled 3rd party lab tested products including Delta 8. We are the good guys, companies like us do exist and they are represented by our membership. You do not need to place us all out of business and destroy our livelihoods and our families. We instead encourage a collaborative effort between the state and the industry to properly regulate these products which would be the best solution that serves everyone well.

Additionally, I share your concerns about the inevitable supply chain issues and the potential boom of the illicit market in the rollout of this Adult Use industry which leads to arrests and violence particularly in underserved communities. As someone who grew up in that environment as an undocumented immigrant, brought to the US as a baby, and had my life basically destroyed by cannabis charges as a juvenile which had me labeled as a criminal for most of my young life and contributed to my inability to acquire a green card until I was 26, I personally identify with that concern. However if these sensible and reasonable regulations are not adopted, we may see even more illicit sales as the demand for these refined hemp cannabinoid

products will not disappear. Therefore, as members of the hemp industry, we stand ready to support the state in their desire to curb illicit sales by supporting the regulation of these products under the ATCC and a collaborative effort to work with the hemp industry to address major issues this incoming industry may have. We are ready and willing to help.

We know that some members of this body want to see these types of products regulated and sold as Adult Use cannabis products only through licensed adult use cannabis facilities. However if that is how the state chooses to address this issue, then it would only be fair if hemp businesses were given a seat at the table in the same way the medical cannabis companies are or by creating a separate license structure like the one outlined by the MDA for the hemp industry producers, manufacturers, and specialty retailers. Our small and minority owned businesses are ready and willing to participate in order to stay in business. Many of our members produce and sell these products exclusively in Maryland and we simply do not want to be edged out of the industry that we built and watch the products that we created be given over to the cannabis establishment without a guarantee of participation in that industry. We can pay into the cannabis fund and convert our businesses into licensed cannabis facilities in order to be able to remain in business and not be destroyed. We created these products, and we invested heavily in the production of them. If these products will be regulated and sold as cannabis products then allowing the Maryland based producers and sellers of these products to convert to Adult Use could help push the industry forward and serve to make the industry more equitable and favorable to small Maryland businesses.

If the state chooses to only allow these products to be sold through the Adult Use market and is willing to allow for hemp businesses that exclusively produce and sell these products in Maryland to convert to cannabis businesses, we can be a resource to the state in many ways. Our farmers and processors can assist with supply issues and our CBD/Hemp specialty shops can help to curb the illicit market by offering more points of retail sales. We are well versed in this industry and have the capital required to become operational quickly without the need for any state funding. We only ask that the state view us as potential partners in collaboration as it does the existing cannabis industry instead of a problematic industry needing to be destroyed. If the state of Maryland would regulate their hemp industry under the ATCC and regulate the refined hemp cannabinoid products properly through that agency, we could set a standard that other states could model that truly prioritized social and economic equity as well as safety and security.

We are confident that the regulation of refined hemp cannabinoids under the ATCC and the creation of a "craft" licensing structure will provide a framework for collaboration between the state and the hemp industry and help to create a sustainable and responsible industry that benefits all Maryland residents. We believe that the ATCC is the best body to regulate the industry, and we stand ready to support the state in their rollout of adult use cannabis by working with the ATCC to regulate these products.

We do not have to crush small businesses to achieve the goals of this \$2 billion marijuana industry. We can have both a successful cannabis industry and protect our small hemp businesses, and this is only possible through common sense regulation that protects both the public safety and the businesses in the hemp industry and there is already a plan in place to do it. Let's collaborate on ways to achieve the most equitable cannabis industry possible which encompasses all parts of the plant.

I urge you to support the safe and regulated sale of hemp products in Maryland, and to stand with us in protecting small businesses and the American Dream. The hemp industry in Maryland requests that **§ 36-1103. 2(B) "A PERSON MAY NOT SELL OR DISTRIBUTE A CANNABINOID PRODUCT THAT IS NOT DERIVED FROM NATURALLY OCCURRING BIOLOGICALLY ACTIVE CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS"** be struck and regulatory language from HB1204 be amended into the appropriate section of this legislation and a "craft" licensing structure be created for existing hemp businesses.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nicholas Patrick
Maryland Healthy Alternatives Association

Proposed Amendments to SB516

Page 69, lines 24: (A) (1) [0.5 MILLIGRAMS OF TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL PER SERVING OR 2.5 MILLIGRAMS OF TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL] 0.3% DELTA-9-TETRAHYDROCANNABINOL ON A DRY WEIGHT BASIS UNLESS THE PERSON IS LICENSED

Page 70, Line 8, STRIKE : [(B) A PERSON MAY NOT SELL OR DISTRIBUTE A CANNABINOID PRODUCT THAT IS NOT DERIVED FROM NATURALLY OCCURRING BIOLOGICALLY ACTIVE CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS.]

Below are letters from consumers of these products. I selected a few out of the dozens we received when our customers heard about this legislation.

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jennifer Fox, I live in Glen Burnie, MD and I am writing to you as a consumer of CBD and hemp-derived THC products.

As someone who has a federal security clearance for employment, I am only able to utilize CBD products to treat my panic and anxiety, as THC is still federally illegal. Until and unless the federal government gets on board with the legalization of marijuana, you risk alienating what I suspect is a large consumer base of CBD products, by restricting access to these products to those who rely on them, and cannot or are uncomfortable with the idea of having to work with recreational dispensaries. You're talking about people who work to support this country, who are trying to better their health and balance that with the fear of losing their jobs. Asking them to visit a dispensary rather than a local shop like Embrace CBD is like asking them to choose their jobs over their health, which should go without saying is an unfair choice.

Many people, like myself, rely on these products for their daily health and wellness needs, and we should not be forced to go to a recreational dispensary in order to access them. The current buying experience is simple and straightforward, and I appreciate the convenience of being able to purchase these products from a trusted source.

After struggling for years to treat my anxiety with prescription medication that had side effects I was not willing to compromise on, the great people at Embrace CBD have quite literally transformed my life. After much hesitation, because of the stigma surrounding the use of CBD and hemp-derived THC products as a federal government employee, and because I had reached a breaking point in dealing with my panic and anxiety, I finally sought the assistance of the folks at Embrace CBD. Not only are they professional and easy to work with as a small business, but they are knowledgeable and very much respect my reservations in trying CBD products because of my employment. Individualized treatment I somehow doubt I would receive at a recreational dispensary, as I would not be the general audience they cater to. They were able to make recommendations based on my needs and restrictions, knowing I am regularly drug tested for work. When I say their wisdom and products transformed my life, I am not exaggerating. After just the first week using the recommended CBD products, I was able to sleep through the night consistently for the first time in years. I am able to go out in public places or with large crowds, drive, and engage in the high-stress of my work without constant panic and fear. I am a better person, better wife, mother, and daughter with the use of these CBD products in my everyday life.

I strongly urge you to protect our access to these products and the existing businesses that sell them. By doing so, you will be ensuring that consumers like myself continue to have access to the products that we need and rely on for our health and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fox

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Leslie Friedman and I live in Glen Burnie, Maryland. I am writing to you today as a consumer of CBD and Hemp- derived THC products that are less potent than Marijuana. I strongly urge you to protect my access to these products without having to purchase them from recreational dispensaries.

I am a true believer that it should be a person's right to choose what works for them hence, the reason I voted to legalize Marijuana in the State of MD. My husband had a Medical Marijuana card in the State of MD to be able to purchase, and consume THC products for pain relief. While the product might have worked he did not like the paranoid feelings that were associated with THC products.

Therefore, he tried CBD and hemp-derived THC products and found they provided him with pain relief he was seeking without the paranoid reactions.

I choose to use these products for their many health and wellness benefits, and I appreciate the ease and affordability of purchasing them from existing businesses that already sell quality, lab-tested products.

By closing these businesses you will be forcing the consumer of CBD and hemp-derived products to search for companies located outside of MD. In addition to losing that revenue you are closing one company to open another, it doesn't make sense.

I strongly urge you to protect my access to the products I need and rely on for my personal health and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Mindy Rector. I live in Chesapeake Beach and I am writing to you as a consumer of CBD and hemp-derived THC products that are less potent than marijuana. I strongly urge you to protect my access to these products without having to purchase them from recreational dispensaries.

I choose to use these products for their many health and wellness benefits, and I appreciate the ease and affordability of purchasing them from existing businesses that already sell quality, lab-tested products. The prices are significantly lower than those found at cannabis dispensaries, and the potency is also lower, making these products more accessible and appealing to a wider range of consumers like myself.

Many people, like myself, rely on these products for their daily health and wellness needs, and we should not be forced to go to a recreational dispensary in order to access them. The current buying experience is simple and straightforward, and I appreciate the convenience of being able to purchase these products from a trusted source.

I want to be able to purchase CBD/Hemp products from Embrace CBD Wellness Centers. I trust them and their products. I have been purchasing products from them for over a year to help me with my anxiety. I drive an hour each way because I don't want to go anywhere else. I strongly urge you to protect our access to these products and the existing businesses that sell them. By doing so, you will be ensuring that consumers like myself continue to have access to the products that we need and rely on for our health and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mindy Rector

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Joyce Hamcky, I live in Glen Burnie and I am writing to you as a consumer of CBD and hemp-derived THC products.

Last year I needed a total hip replacement, I was in constant excruciating pain. I needed to lose 40 lbs. before the doctors would do the surgery. Someone told me about the CBD oil to help relieve some of the excruciating pain. I purchased and started taking the CBD oil, every day, multiple times a day. It didn't take away all the pain, but it did definitely help with the excruciating part of the pain. I was able to cope and focus on losing the 40 lbs. I needed to lose. It also helped me to be able to sleep at night and I believe it also helped curb my appetite, so I was able to lose the 40 lbs. I needed to lose. I had the total hip replacement on November 2022 and am still using the CBD oil to help me to be able to exercise and be able to do my physical therapy to get my body back to where it was over a year ago. One of the best reasons for taking the CBD, I have not had to rely on prescription pain drugs to get me thru all the pain, prior to the surgery and currently with all the rehab at physical therapy. I don't know how successful I would have been with functioning with all the pain I was in, being able to sleep, losing the weight and

getting thru the entire process. Also, would not have been able to afford using the CBD oil if I had to purchase it at the recreational dispensaries which are more expensive.

The people at Embrace CBD Wellness Centers were very helpful with explaining what my options were, what to try, how much to take, the specials they have every day which helped me to be able to afford to use their products.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joyce Hamcky

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to you as a concerned friend of a resident of Frederick, who is a consumer of CBD and hemp-derived THC products.. I have been informed of the issues they are facing and strongly urge you to protect their access to these products without having to purchase them from recreational dispensaries.

As an outsider, I understand that this may not directly affect me. However, I strongly believe that every consumer should have access to products that can help them maintain their health and well-being. I have witnessed the positive effects that these products have had on my friend's life, and I believe it is important to protect their access to them.

My friend has expressed their appreciation for the ease and affordability of purchasing these products from existing businesses that already sell quality, lab-tested products. They have informed me that the prices are significantly lower than those found at cannabis dispensaries, and the potency is also lower, making these products more accessible and appealing to a wider range of consumers.

I understand that many people, like my friend, rely on these products for their daily health and wellness needs. It is crucial that they should not be forced to go to a recreational dispensary in order to access them. The current buying experience is simple and straightforward, and I believe it is essential to maintain this convenience for consumers like my friend.

I strongly urge you to protect their access to these products and the existing businesses that sell them. By doing so, you will be ensuring that consumers continue to have access to the products that they need and rely on for their health and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Noah Langdon.

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Casey. I live in Pasadena and I am writing to you as a consumer of CBD and hemp-derived THC products that are less potent than marijuana. I strongly urge you to protect my access to these products without having to purchase them from recreational dispensaries.

I suffer from osteoarthritis throughout my body and choose to use these products as an alternative to prescription pain relief. I appreciate the ease and affordability of purchasing them from existing businesses that I trust and with whom I have a rapport. I know my wellness center already sells quality, lab-tested products. The prices are significantly lower than those found at cannabis dispensaries and, more importantly to me, the potency is lower.

I strongly urge you to protect our access to these products and the existing businesses that sell them. By doing so, you will be ensuring that consumers like myself continue to have access to the products that we need and rely on for our health and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Casey Ventola

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Renae Reeves. I live in Glen Burnie, MD and I am writing to you as a consumer of CBD and hemp-derived THC products.

I have my state approved medical cannabis card but after many failed attempts to find a more stable dosage for me once realizing the dispensaries THC potency was just too strong, I decided to switch to CBD and hemp-derived products and have not been disappointed. Now I am able to comfortably purchase my products knowing I'm not going to have to play pharmacist or guinea pig.

I have also purchased CBD for my dog who has shown significant improvement with his inflammation of his joints but more importantly his seizure reduction. One less thing in life I have to worry about.

I strongly urge you to protect our access to these products and the existing businesses that sell them. By doing so, you will be ensuring that consumers like myself continue to have access to the products that we need and rely on for our health and well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rena D. Reeves