



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter  
In Favor of SB762  
-Drug Paraphernalia for Administration – Decriminalization-**

**Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
On March 7, 2023**

**Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee:  
HB173, the cross file for SB 762, passed in the House Judiciary Committee  
last week.**

**SB762 will do a number of things:**

- **decriminalize paraphernalia used to administer drugs (ingest, inhale, or otherwise introduce into the body)**
- **Reduce the criminalization of people who use drugs (which we know does not help engage them in supportive services such as harm reduction programs or drug treatment)**
- **Streamline the confusing and unjust patchwork of exemptions in current law for paraphernalia that confuse police and result in program participants who are authorized to carry paraphernalia still being stopped and harassed**
- **Reduce the risk of police being stuck by used needles because there is no longer a reason to lie about possessing them**

- **Encourage people to use clean supplies every time to prevent transfer of bacteria (that can cause skin and soft tissue infections) and infectious diseases (such as HIV and HCV)**
- **Encourage people to dispose of used supplies in a proper location instead of trying to get rid of them asap to avoid catching a charge**

**SB762 will not:**

- **Decriminalize the drugs**
- **Decriminalize paraphernalia used to manufacture and sell drugs**

**The decriminalization of paraphernalia proposed by this legislation will continue to help ensure that people are accessing services, such as syringe service programs, and will avoid unnecessary arrest and incarceration.**

**Decriminalization will provide greater incentive to seek treatment as people who are using substances will be less afraid of law enforcement interaction.**

**In decriminalizing paraphernalia, the State will also reduce the need for people to re-use certain items that may contribute to the transmission of infectious diseases.**

**This will have a positive public health impact on the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C.**

**Further, the collateral damage of unnecessary incarceration continues to harm people in Maryland, and disproportionately people of color**

**For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 762.**

**Sincerely,**



**Jill P. Carter, Esq.**