



March 7, 2023

Senator Melanie Griffith, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Griffith:

I am writing as CEO/Founder of CannabizMD, a Maryland certified MBE/SBE/DBE and Tea Pad. Both social enterprises are focused on filling the void of cannabis science and policy education, particularly for women and people of color for advancement in STEM. I am a member of the first cohort of the Master of Science in Medical Cannabis Science and Therapeutics at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy. I am now an adjunct professor in the same program in classes focused on federal and state cannabis laws and policies. I am in favor of SB 0516, Cannabis Reform, with amendments.

Cannabis is not a panacea nor it is benign. My suggested amendments focus on prioritizing with immediacy the need for education for Maryland cannabis industry employees, volunteers, and any other authorized person as well as public health education.

Firstly, I am an advocate for every cannabis agent and certified caregiver registered in the State of Maryland to be required to have a minimum of two hours of cannabis science and policy education delivered by a Maryland-certified responsible vendor. Cannabis education is especially important in an adult use program where there is likely zero involvement of a cannabis-educated healthcare provider in the commercial transaction.

Secondly, given that this proposed piece of legislation is an Act that is an emergency measure and as such, it is necessary for the immediate preservation of public health and safety that funds from the Cannabis Public Health Fund are swiftly released to qualified vendors with dates specified in the ACT with priority given to MBE and qualified minority-owned entities for education and public awareness campaigns on the potential benefits and harms of cannabis use including driving under the influence of cannabis (DUIC) and to include funding for school-based educational programs.

Cannabis public health education improves public health, and health equity, and will help to combat the illicit cannabis industry.

Best,

Jacque Cohen Roth, MS
Founder/CEO