



February 15, 2023

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 249 – Motor Vehicle Administration - Driver Education Program - Cannabis – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Smith:

The Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission (the Commission) is submitting this letter of information for Senate Bill 249 entitled Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) - Driver Education Program - Cannabis. SB 249 requires the existing driver's education curriculum to include information on the laws relating to and risks of driving while under the influence of cannabis.

Cannabis consumption can negatively impact reaction time, motor coordination, and attention.¹ Additionally, different methods of consumption vary widely in onset, length, and level of intoxication. Recent surveys conducted by the Commission and the Maryland School of Pharmacy found that (1) driving after consuming cannabis is common and (2) there are potentially harmful misperceptions about the risks associated with cannabis use:

- One in five young adults and a similar proportion of medical cannabis patients have driven within three hours of consuming cannabis in the past month.^{2,3}
- Marylanders of all age groups (12-17, 18-25, 26+) perceive monthly cannabis use to be half as risky as regular alcohol use and a third as risky as regular smoking.⁴

In 2020, the American Public Health Association issued policy recommendations for states with legalized cannabis use, which include providing education on cannabis, impairment, and driving – similar to education provided on alcohol and driving – to mitigate incidences of impaired driving and crashes.⁵ The National Safety Council has also emphasized the importance of educating drivers about cannabis impairment.⁶ In January 2023, Massachusetts became the first state with legal medical and adult-use cannabis to add cannabis to education to its driver's education curriculum.⁷

SB 249 will provide important information to Maryland drivers to protect the health and safety of the public and bolster existing efforts to minimize harms associated with impaired driving. Please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Garrison, Deputy Director of Policy & Government Affairs with any further questions at andrew.garrison@maryland.gov or (443) 844-6114.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Tilburg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William Tilburg, JD, MPH
Executive Director
Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission

This position does not necessarily reflect the position of the Maryland Department of Health or the Office of the Governor.

Enclosure: MMCC Fact Sheet: [Cannabis and Driving Don't Mix](#)
cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

1:Rune E. Risk of road accident associated with the use of drugs: A systematic review and meta-analysis of evidence from epidemiological studies, *Accident Analysis & Prevention*. 2013. 60: 254-267. doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2012.06.017.

2: Maryland Young Adult Survey on Alcohol (MYSA) 2020 and Maryland Medical Cannabis Patient Survey 2022

3:Recent guidance suggests waiting at least 6 hours after consuming cannabis to drive, since it may not be easy to recognize impairment, and effects of cannabis consumption can be delayed.

4: [2018-2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Model-Based Prevalence Estimates \(50 States and the District of Columbia\) \(samhsa.gov\)](#)

5:[A Public Health Approach to Regulating Commercially Legalized Cannabis \(apha.org\)](#)

6: [Cannabis and Safety: It's Complicated - National Safety Council \(nsc.org\)](#)

7:[Massachusetts Adding Cannabis Education to Driving School Curriculum | Mass.gov](#)