

TESTIMONY FOR SB0073

Criminal Law - Cannabis-Related Offenses - Civil Penalties

Bill Sponsor: Senator Carter

Committee: Judiciary Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

Person Submitting: Kris Urs, LSPC Community Organizer

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0074 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

Maryland Voters from the Eastern Shore to Western Maryland overwhelmingly supported repealing the criminalization of marijuana for recreational purposes in November's election. Nevertheless, under the new law, marijuana-related offenses including possession with the intention to distribute or possession of more than what is necessary for personal use still pose the risk of being convicted of a misdemeanor. Without abolishing these sanctions, people will be at risk of continuing arrest trends in which they will continue to be charged with crimes in spite of legalization. Legalization must prevent future disparities in addition to rectifying past wrongs.

It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.