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WASHINGTON REGIONAL ALCOHOL PROGRAM

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February 15, 2023

Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Maryland Senate  
Annapolis, Maryland

Re.: Support for "Motor Vehicle Administration – Driver Education Program – Cannabis," SB 249, Kramer (D-Montgomery County)

**"Past-year, past-month and daily marijuana use (amongst young U.S. adults 19 to 30 years old) reached the highest levels ever recorded since these trends were first monitored in 1988."**

– The National Institute on Drug Abuse's funded 2022 "Monitoring the Future" study

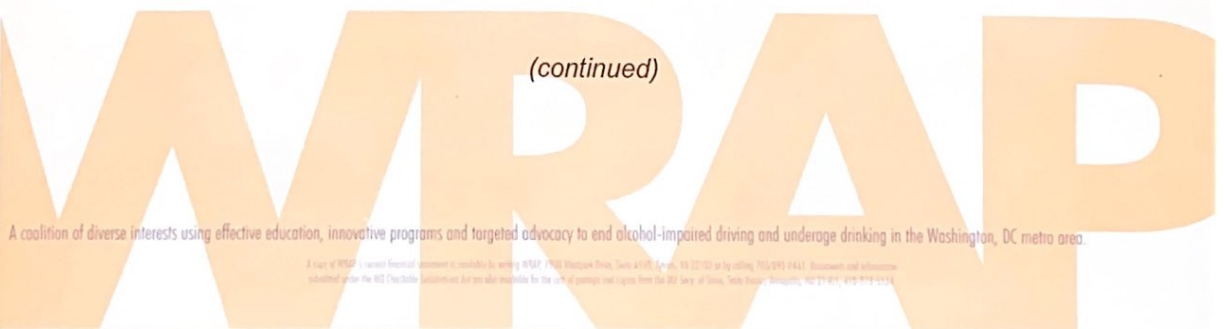
Dear Senators:

On behalf of the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program's (WRAP) Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and the more than six-million Maryland residents we serve in the fight against drunk driving and underage drinking (including having served as project director of both Maryland's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign and "Maryland Remembers" ceremony), I wanted to formally communicate to you WRAP's unequivocal support for **Senate Bill 249, "Motor Vehicle Administration – Driver Education Program – Cannabis" (Kramer, D-Montgomery County).**

Succinctly, SB 249 proposes to have the state's driver education curriculum include information on the "risks of driving while under the influence of cannabis."

As plainly stated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "driving under the influence of drugs, including marijuana, is dangerous and illegal" as "marijuana use can impair important skills required for safe driving by: slowing your reaction time and ability to make decisions; impairing coordination; and distorting perception" (CDC, "Marijuana Use and Driving," 2021).

(continued)



A sign of WRAP's recent financial statement is available by sending WRAP, 7900 Westpark Drive, Suite A550, Tysons, VA 22102 or by calling 703.893.0461. Business and information submitted under the ND Confidentiality provisions. For more information for the use of graphics and logos from the WRAP sign, "State House" logo, "1911-1914" logo.

2.15.23 wrap ltr.; page two

With Maryland poised to legalize recreational marijuana this year, SB 249 proposes the installation of public safety "guard rails" in the form of requiring Maryland's Motor Vehicle Administration to include in the state's driver education curriculum "information on the laws relating to and the risks of driving while under the influence of cannabis."

As marijuana, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, is "the illicit drug *most* frequently found in the blood of drivers who have been involved in vehicle crashes, including fatal ones" (NIDA, "Cannabis Research Report," 2020) and that "studies have found a direct relationship between blood THC concentration and impaired driving ability," the time to install said safeguard is now.

Combine that with the facts that while the number of licensed young drivers (15 to 20 years old) in the U.S. decreased by 4.7-percent in 2020 yet the number of fatalities involving these same young drivers *increased* and by a double-digit percentage (17%) during this same period (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, "Young Drivers," 2022), and you've underscored both the need to fortify the state's impaired driving-prevention education efforts and for this very legislation.

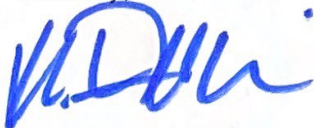
*(Today, according to NHTSA, over ten-percent [10.2%, 2020] of Maryland's traffic deaths involve drivers ages 15-20.)*

□□□□

With nearly a third (31%) of U.S. high school seniors reporting marijuana use in the last 12 months – and that "past-year, past-month and daily marijuana use (amongst young U.S. adults 19 to 30 years old) reached the highest levels ever recorded since these trends were first monitored in 1988" (National Institute on Drug Abuse's funded 2022 "Monitoring the Future" study) -- the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program supports Senate Bill 249 as a means of preventing impaired driving in the state.

In as much, we thank you, in advance, for your consideration of favorably reporting this potentially lifesaving legislation. I may be directly reached with any questions at either 703-893-0461 or at [kurt@wrap.org](mailto:kurt@wrap.org).

Cordially,



Kurt Gregory Erickson  
President