

February 3, 2023

Edward C. Traver, M.D.
721 E. Fort Ave
Baltimore, MD 21230

Delegate Luke Clippinger
101 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: FAVORABLE on HB0173 (Drug Paraphernalia for Administration – Decriminalization)

Dear Delegate Clippinger and members of the Judiciary Committee,

I write to plead for you to do everything in your power to pass House Bill 0173 to decriminalize drug paraphernalia. I am an assistant professor and infectious disease doctor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and a resident of District 46 for over 5 years.

Every day I take care of patients who are infected with **HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C**. These are chronic, terrible viral infections that cause cancer, secondary infections, immense suffering, and untimely death. These viruses are acquired by using equipment (paraphernalia) that had previously been used by someone else. **Using new, sterile equipment completely prevents the transmission of these infections from using drugs.**

Furthermore, **bacterial infections** caused by injection drug use are destroying the bodies and lives of people who inject drugs. These infections are often caused by using dirty, reused, and shared injection equipment. In one study, among people who developed a bacterial infection of the heart valves from injecting drugs, most were dead after 10 years (Straw et al, *Clinical Infectious Disease*, 2020). **These devastating and cruel infections can be prevented if people have access to sterile injection equipment.**

On behalf of our neighbors and fellow citizens, please review this bill favorably. It will serve to make their lives safer, healthier, and longer.

Sincerely,



Edward C. Traver, M.D.