



February 21, 2023

HB 506

**Testimony from Olivia Naugle, senior policy analyst, MPP, favorable**

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Moon, and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Olivia Naugle, and I am the senior policy analyst for the Marijuana Policy Project (MPP), the largest cannabis policy reform organization in the United States. MPP has been working to improve cannabis policy for 27 years; as a national organization, we have expertise in the various approaches taken by different states.

MPP has played a leading role in most of the major cannabis policy reforms since 2000, including more than a dozen medical cannabis laws and 12 of the 21 campaigns to enact legalization laws, including the first two states to legalize cannabis through the state legislature, rather than the ballot box — Illinois and Vermont.

The Marijuana Policy Project strongly supports legalizing and regulating cannabis for adults 21 and older and doing so in a way that repairs the damage inflicted by criminalization.

I am here today **in support of HB 506.**

This past election, Maryland voters voted overwhelmingly in favor (67.2 percent) of Question 4 — a constitutional amendment to legalize cannabis for adults in Maryland beginning July 1, 2023. In fact, the passage of Question 4 was the highest margin of any ballot measure to legalize cannabis.

HB 506 is a technical fix to improve upon the policy enacted in the companion statute (HB 837, 2022) that was contingent on Question 4's passage. Under current law, it is unclear if adults are able to manufacture a personal use amount of cannabis products at home (i.e. brownies, tinctures, etc.). This bill clearly makes this conduct legal, while making sure volatile/hazardous extractions aren't allowed.

Many patients and consumers will benefit from being able to produce their own cannabis products at home by easing the burden of affordability and accessibility of products. Consumers should not fear police interactions, arrest, or a criminal record due to ambiguity in this area of the law.

Even if current law would be interpreted to allow adults to make a personal use amount of cannabis at home, it doesn't specify that hazardous extractions would not be allowed. Some processes of extracting THC — i.e. using butane — for cannabis products are dangerous

and have led to explosions that caused grave injuries, property damage, and even death.<sup>1</sup> HB 506 explicitly prohibits extractions using hazardous solvents such as butane, hexane, and propane. Clarifying that hazardous methods of extraction are prohibited will allow the state to inform the public that those types of extractions are illegal, to deter potential hazards.

Thank you to Delegate Grammer for bringing this legislation forward. Thank you members of the committee for your time today. We respectfully urge a favorable report for HB 506.

If you have any questions or need additional information, I would be happy to help and can be reached at the email address or phone number below.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/local/communities/oxnard/2021/11/11/man-dies-days-after-butane-honey-oil-explosion-oxnard/6391818001/>; <https://www.ksdk.com/article/news/local/kirkwood-home-explosion-caused-thc-extraction-process/63-a4d5fd78-8fda-409d-ae4a-b15ff3429b61>; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-drugs-insight/exploding-danger-u-s-marijuana-oil-labs-pose-deadly-destructive-hazard-idUSKCN1T51F4>