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Environment and Transportation
Committee

Chair

Charles County Delegation



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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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RE: HB280 Criminal Law - Cannabis-Related Offenses - Civil Penalties

Dear Chairman Clippinger and members of the Judiciary,

This past November the legislature took the bold step of presenting the legalization of adult-use cannabis as a referendum. Marylanders overwhelmingly supported the legalization of cannabis in our state. They entrusted us to create the framework for legalization. It is our responsibility at this time to do our part in stopping mass incarceration, minimize police interactions, pretextual police stops, loss of employment, excessive fines, and loss of generational wealth which has debilitated over-policed neighborhoods related to the use and possession of cannabis.

This bill aims to replace criminal penalties with alternatives of reasonable fines, rehabilitation programs, or community service. Centering our citizens safety and quality of life are the focal points for this proposed legislation. I submit to you that if these policies and practices of incarceration and excessive fines continue, we have failed. I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 208.