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POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: HB 413- Firearms - Right to Purchase, Possess, and Carry

FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

POSITION: Favorable

DATE: 02/06/2023

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue a favorable report on House Bill 413.

House Bill 413 would provide medical marijuana patients with the same rights as their fellow Maryland residents. This bill would ensure that individuals do not lose their right to purchase, possess, or carry a firearm, and are thus not subject to unnecessary and potential criminalization for merely registering as a legal medical marijuana patient. Maryland already has robust laws restricting the possession of firearms. The policy purpose of those laws are not strengthened by preventing medical marijuana patients from lawfully possessing firearms. Rather, this law is in line with ongoing legislative efforts collectively aimed at decriminalizing marijuana and reducing the of individuals who may possess and use marijuana in criminal legal jeopardy.

For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 413.

Submitted by: Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Government Relations Division.

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