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Baltimore City and Baltimore County

Committee on Education, Energy,  
and Environment

*Subcommittees*

Chair, Education  
Environment

*Joint Committees*

Chair, on Administrative, Executive,  
and Legislative Review

The Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal  
Bays Critical Areas



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## **SB699 – Cannabis – Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund – Distribution and Use of Funds for Baltimore City**

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and members of the committee,

I am Senator Mary Washington, and I am submitting this as favorable testimony on **SB699 – Cannabis – Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund – Distribution and Use of Funds for Baltimore City**.

When cannabis was officially legalized in Maryland, we also created a Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund. The purpose of this fund is to support low-income communities and communities disproportionately affected by cannabis-related arrests to help repair the harm caused.

The Comptroller manages the fund, and 35% of the tax revenue from cannabis sales goes into the fund. Each county is allocated a certain percentage of these funds based on the proportion of cannabis possession charges in each jurisdiction over the 20 years before cannabis was legalized. **Baltimore City, having the highest proportion of cannabis-related arrests, is allotted 30.6%.**

**SB699 will redirect the funds from the Cannabis Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund to newly established Equitable Community Investment Councils throughout Baltimore City. These Councils will disburse funds to support programs and services in their district.**

There will be five Councils, one for each legislative district. The Councils will include:

- One non-voting member of the Senate who represents the district
- One non-voting member of the House of Delegates who represents the district
- At least three representatives from organizations led by individuals from disproportionately impacted areas
- At least two young adult members between the ages of 18 to 24
- At least two representatives from nonprofit human services or community development organizations that benefit traditionally underserved residents
- Up to seven representatives of neighborhood-based community associations within the district

The Councils will only be allowed to fund initiatives as they relate to:

- Behavioral health crisis response services
- Education and after-school programs
- Truancy and absenteeism intervention programs
- Housing and homelessness prevention
- Transportation improvements in high-density transit corridors
- Job training and workforce development
- Community services, including child care and recreational services
- Other programs that benefit individuals and families impacted by incarceration

I drafted this bill to ensure that the reinvestment funds are used to genuinely benefit and repair communities harmed by cannabis over-enforcement, authentic community involvement in how the funds are spent, long-term strategic planning and investment in Baltimore City, and State involvement in managing State funds.