

JACK BAILEY  
*Legislative District 29*  
Calvert and St. Mary's Counties

Budget & Taxation Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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**Senate Bill 158 – Cannabis Licensing – Zoning Requirements – Alteration**

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to introduce Senate Bill 158. This bill would restore local control over the zoning requirements for cannabis facilities that were not operational prior to October 1, 2022.

Last year's cannabis reform legislation included provisions limiting local control over zoning decisions relating to cannabis facilities. These provisions have had a significant detrimental effect on the efforts of my constituents who live near a cannabis facility that has been built with plans to further expand in Abell in a rural part of St. Mary's County known as the Seventh District.

The Seventh District community came together to share their many concerns. Through their efforts, these citizens were able to secure concessions regarding the construction and operations of the cannabis facility, which would need to be enforced through the county's zoning process. Passage of the zoning provisions in last year's legislation essentially nullified the work that the community had done to alleviate these concerns about the effect of this facility on this rural part of my district, as the County could no longer enforce the promises made by the owner of the facility.

I respect the concern about how local zoning policies can add to the regulatory burden facing our Maryland businesses. However, the enactment of last year's legislation had no effect on whether this facility would move forward or not – it would have been built with or without this provision being enacted by the State. The residents of the Seventh District and their local representatives used the process that was available to them to work with the owner of the facility on a compromise to address their concerns. I believe that this is the way the process should work. In situations like these where operations could impact a community, the members of that community should be able to be part of the conversation and process as they would for any other project of this scale. State law should not take away the opportunity that they deserve to move forward under the reasonable conditions set forth by the County.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 158. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bailey".

Senator Jack Bailey