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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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House Bill 706

Drug Paraphernalia for Administration – Decriminalization

Support

Ever since the passage of the Justice Reinvestment Act, this legislation has been proposed to correct an oversight.

Per the 2023 testimony of the Office of the Attorney General, “urging favorable report” of the bill to ‘remove Controlled Dangerous Substances (“CDS”) paraphernalia used for administration or consumption of CDS from the criminal prohibitions related to CDS paraphernalia. Additionally, HB 706 also reduces the penalties related to CDS paraphernalia used for manufacture/distribution.’

Of the countless lessons learned from both the opioid pandemic and the fentanyl crisis, we are well aware that drug use and abuse are not limited to the user, it puts all of us at risk. For example, 1/3 of metropolitan police officers are stuck with a needle while searching people because they do not want to get caught with a syringe. HB 706 eliminates the risk to our officers, as well as our children from getting stuck by needles discarded on playgrounds.

As a matter of public policy, criminalizing drug users, as opposed to treating them, is counterproductive and costly.