

MARLON AMPREY
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DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Economic Matters Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 25, 2025

**Testimony of Delegate Marlon Amprey in Support of HB1377 Cannabis - Advertising -
Prohibited Locations (Equity in Cannabis Advertising Act)**

Dear Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

Maryland should always aim to foster an environment where fairness and equity are prioritized, ensuring that all communities can participate in this burgeoning market. However, disparities in advertising and promotion within the cannabis industry threaten this goal, particularly when it comes to marginalized groups who have been historically impacted by cannabis prohibition. The influx of social equity license holders and new license holders are not able to have the access to marketing that legacy license holders now have.

House Bill 1377 aims to address these inequities by promoting equal opportunities for social equity license holders to participate in cannabis advertising. The legacy companies from the medical licenses only era were given the opportunity to promote and advertise in a careful manner that has given them a leg up in the competition. If we want our social equity license holders to thrive, we have to give them the same resources we gave the medical license holders.

HB1377 simply restores our advertising rules to the original rules of advertising from when we first made cannabis legal in Maryland and imposes restrictions to make sure we are doing it fairly and thoughtfully. Cannabis companies would be able to advertise to the public but with strict rules and guidelines to ensure it is done tastefully and carefully.

The impact of HB1377 would be far-reaching, benefiting not only businesses but also communities that have been disproportionately affected by the criminalization of cannabis. The law will require that advertising opportunities be distributed equitably, with particular attention given to businesses that are owned by individuals from these communities. By having advertising re-open in Maryland and by doing it carefully, we can ensure the cannabis industry can blossom and create more revenue for the state while fully dismantling the black market.

HB1377 sets standards that ensure fairness, inclusion, and equal access while ensuring the advertising does not harm or entice children. The cannabis industry has the potential to be a key driver of economic growth in Maryland, and it is essential that all people, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to share in this success. This bill will help Maryland lead the way in creating an inclusive and fair marketplace, where all individuals have an equal chance to participate, succeed, and contribute to the state's growing cannabis economy.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on House Bill 1377.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlon Amprey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a stylized "A".

Delegate Marlon Amprey
40th Legislative District of Maryland