



WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 726

Cannabis Licensees Bona Fide Labor Organizations Labor Peace Agreements

March 6, 2025
Finance Committee

TO: Hon. Pamela Beidle, Chair,
Hon. Antonio Hayes, Vice-Chair, and
Members of the Finance Committee

FR: Jason M. Chorpenning
President, United Food & Commercial Workers International Union, Local 27
21 West Road, Towson, MD 21204

On behalf of the 23,000 working men and women represented by the United Food & Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 27, I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB 726.

Nationally, UFCW represents over 1.3 million hard-working individuals employed in highly regulated industries, including the emerging legal cannabis industry. Our cannabis members work across multiple states in growing and cultivating facilities, manufacturing and processing facilities, laboratories, and dispensaries, including right here in Maryland.

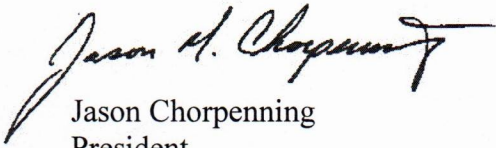
UFCW Local 27 believes it is essential to consider certain factors when determining whether an organization qualifies as a bona fide labor organization. Ensuring that officers are elected by membership is a critical measure that helps guarantee a union remains free from employer domination or interference. Additionally, we support the inclusion of labor peace agreements as a requirement for the renewal of cannabis licenses in Maryland.

Labor peace agreements are a crucial regulatory tool that protect businesses, workers, and consumers alike. These agreements help maintain stability in the workforce, ensuring that labor disputes do not disrupt operations, while also safeguarding workers' rights. Given the significant weakening of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), workers must increasingly rely on state legislatures to uphold fundamental protections that have been eroded at the federal level.

We commend Senator Ellis for sponsoring this legislation, which aligns with the growing national and state-level recognition of the importance of labor rights in the cannabis industry. Including labor peace provisions in Maryland's cannabis regulations closes a loophole that some employers have exploited to deny workers their rights. By doing so, the state ensures that cannabis industry employees enjoy the same protections as other workers across Maryland.

Finally, the inclusion of labor peace language allows employees to exercise their right to unionize without fear of intimidation or coercion, ensuring a fair and democratic process.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the Committee to SUPPORT SB 726.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jason A. Chorpenning". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jason Chorpenning
President