



Joint Letter House Bill 132 & Senate Bill 215

January 10, 2025

Letter of Information

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes and Members of Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House Bill 132 and Senate Bill 215, Cannabis – On-Site Consumption Establishments and Events. The American Lung Association, American Heart Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network want to provide some additional information to encourage the committee to protect Maryland’s strong Clean Indoor Air Act by prohibiting the smoking and vaping of cannabis indoors as the bill is originally drafted.

Our organizations strongly believe that the smoking of cannabis should be prohibited in all places where smoking is prohibited. We continue to fight for laws and policies to make our communities in Maryland and across the country smokefree. All Americans deserve to live, work, study and play in smokefree environments. By implementing smokefree environments, all workers and patrons can be protected from the dangers of all types of secondhand smoke, including cannabis smoke.

Secondhand cannabis smoke contains many of the same toxins and carcinogens found in directly inhaled tobacco smoke. The toxins can cause lung irritation, asthma attacks, and make respiratory infections more likely. Exposure to secondhand smoke can exacerbate health problems especially for people with respiratory conditions like asthma, bronchitis, or COPD.

The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that there is no safe level of exposure to toxic secondhand smoke.ⁱ The U.S. Surgeon General has also concluded that separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposure of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke. In addition, in a 2016 report, the Surgeon General concluded that secondhand e-cigarette emissions contain, “nicotine; ultrafine particles; volatile organic compounds such as benzene, which is found in car exhaust; and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.”ⁱⁱ The only effective way to fully protect nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke and aerosol is to completely eliminate smoking and vaping in indoor public spaces.ⁱⁱⁱ

As just one indication of concern about the health impact of secondhand cannabis smoke, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) updated its air standards to include cannabis smoke (as well as emissions from electronic smoking devices) in its definition of “environmental tobacco smoke.”^{iv} ASHRAE’s position is that the only way to effectively eliminate the health risks posed by indoor exposure to secondhand smoke is to prohibit smoking.



The American Lung Association, American Heart Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, thank Maryland lawmakers for their continued commitment to the health and wellbeing of the residents of Maryland and the desire to protect Marylanders from exposure to secondhand smoke. The American Lung Association, American Heart Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, encourage the committee to keep the bills as originally drafted and prohibit the smoking and vaping of cannabis indoors. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact any of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aleks Casper".

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ⁱU.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.

ⁱⁱU.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General—Executive Summary*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.

ⁱⁱⁱHHS, 2006.

^{iv}ASHRAE. Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality, ANSI/ASHRAE Addenda Standard 62.1-2013. [2015 Addenda Supplement to ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2013](#)