

January 29, 2025

The Honorable William C. (Will) Smith, JR., Esq.
Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT of Senate Bill 370

(Criminal Law - Drug Paraphernalia for Administration - Decriminalization) - FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Clippinger and House Judiciary Committee Members,

I, Sam Dunn, services manager at Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition, support Senate Bill 370 (Criminal Law - Drug Paraphernalia for Administration - Decriminalization) which will revise existing criminal law to remove items that could be used to consume drugs from what is considered drug paraphernalia, effectively decriminalizing possession of those items.

Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition is a community based organization that implements public health services based in harm reduction, provides community trainings and other resources, and advocates for policies to expand harm reduction initiatives in Baltimore and across the states of Maryland. We believe in the value and dignity of all people, especially those who use drugs, engage in sex work, and or have been impacted by the criminalization of such activities by the war on drugs and anti-sex worker policies. We currently provide syringes, and safer use supplies to the communities of Baltimore City. Distributing sterile syringes helps reduce the spread of certain infectious diseases.

From years of doing this work I deeply recognize how stigma and fear from persecution can limit peoples use of these services, which means they will continue to share used syringes, which can result in the passing of certain diseases and lead to death. Decriminalizing paraphernalies and removing penalties for having sterile drug use supplies would benefit our organization and the community. Current protections for SSP participants are not currently enough to keep people safe. These penalties also affect participants that distribute to others in their community and negatively impacts accessibility to these services.

We believe that this bill will simplify Maryland's paraphernalia laws and clarify that possession of harm reduction supplies to prevent infectious disease is not a crime. **We ask that the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee give SB370 a favorable report.**

For more information about this position, please contact Sam Dunn at hyunkyudunn@gmail.com