

February 11, 2025

The Honorable Chair Delegate Luke Clippenger  
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee  
100-101 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT of House Bill 0556

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

Dear Chair Clippenger and House Judiciary Committee Members,

My name is Hyun and I work at Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition. I support House Bill 0556 (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.

The mission of the coalition I work for is to advocate and support those that have been directly affected by the war on drugs and anti sex worker policies. Through the work that I do everyday in the community as a syringe service program it's clear that removing penalties for having sterile drug use supplies would benefit my organization and community. Our participants wouldn't have to worry as much about being criminalized for carrying around paraphernalia, and would be more inclined to bring back the used syringes for us to properly dispose of them. This could also lead to participants feeling more comfortable bringing paraphernalia to be tested through the state's RAD program or Rapid Analysis of Drugs testing program. This gives us more knowledge and information into the current drug supply, which ultimately keeps people safer. The current protections for SSP participants aren't enough to keep people safe because people are still being arrested for carrying paraphernalia on a daily basis. This also prevents our participants from getting safer use supplies for people that cannot access our services due to life circumstances and fear of imprisonment.

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 House Judiciary Committee give HB0556 a favorable report.

For more information about this position, please contact **Hyun Dunn** at [hyun@baltimoreharmreduction.org](mailto:hyun@baltimoreharmreduction.org) or **Candy Kerr** at [candy@baltimoreharmreduction.org](mailto:candy@baltimoreharmreduction.org)