

CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI
Chief Deputy Attorney General

LEONARD J. HOWIE III
Deputy Attorney General

CARRIE J. WILLIAMS
Deputy Attorney General

ZENITA WICKHAM HURLEY
Chief, Equity, Policy, and Engagement



**STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

ANTHONY G. BROWN
Attorney General

PETER V. BERNIS
General Counsel

CHRISTIAN E. BARRERA
Chief Operating Officer

February 11, 2025

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chair, Judiciary Committee

FROM: Adam Spangler
Legislative Aide, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: House Bill 556 – Drug Paraphernalia for Administration – Decriminalization
- **Favorable**

The Office of Attorney General urges a favorable report on **House Bill 556**, Delegate Simpson's bill to remove Controlled Dangerous Substance ("CDS") paraphernalia used for administration or consumption of CDS (as opposed to paraphernalia for manufacture or distribution) from the criminal prohibitions related to CDS paraphernalia. **House Bill 556** also lower the penalties related to CDS paraphernalia used for manufacture/distribution.

As the opioid pandemic has illustrated, drug use and abuse are public health hazards that should be addressed holistically. Criminalizing drug users, as opposed to treating them, can be costly and counterproductive.

House Bill 556 is a commonsense measure to decriminalize the mere possession of drug paraphernalia. We urge a favorable report on **House Bill 556**.

cc: Judiciary Committee Members