



Career Fire Fighters Association of Frederick County, MD Inc.
International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3666
Affiliated with:
Maryland State Professional Fire Fighters Association and The Central Maryland Labor Council / AFL-CIO



SUPPORT

HB 797: Employment Discrimination - Fire and Rescue Public Safety Employees - Use of Medical Cannabis

**Sponsored by: Delegate Boaf
Economic Matters Committee
Hearing 3/11 at 1:00 p.m.**

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee,

I write as the President of the Career Firefighters Association of Frederick County, Maryland (IAFF Local 3666) – Frederick County’s public employee organization that represents the over 600 men and women employed with the Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue. I am writing to express my support for HB 797.

This legislation is a critical step in ensuring that those who dedicate their lives to public safety are not unfairly penalized for seeking medically approved treatments.

Firefighters, paramedics, and other rescue personnel face some of the most physically and emotionally demanding conditions of any profession. Many suffer from chronic pain, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other conditions as a result of their service. Medical cannabis, under the guidance of a healthcare provider, has been shown to be an effective and less harmful alternative to opioids and other pharmaceuticals. We believe it is unjust for these employees to risk disciplinary action or job loss simply for using a legally prescribed treatment to manage their health conditions.

This bill does not compromise workplace safety. It does not permit on-the-job impairment, nor does it prevent employers from enforcing policies to ensure employees remain fit for duty. Instead, it ensures that fire and rescue personnel who follow state law and medical guidance are not unfairly targeted for choosing a medically sanctioned treatment. Impairment is measured using the exact methodology that supervisors use for other substances such as overuse of prescription medications.

By passing this legislation, the state will align employment protections for fire and rescue employees with existing medical cannabis laws, reinforcing the principle that no one should have to choose between their health and their livelihood. We urge this committee to issue a favorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,
Stephen Jones, President, IAFF Local 3666