



Governor Wes Moore

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller

Secretary Walter L. Simmons

Bill Number: Senate Bill 594
Title: Cannabis – Advertising – Alterations
Committee: Economic Matters Committee
Hearing Date: March 31, 2026
Position: Favorable

Chair Valderrama, Vice-chair Charkoudian, and members of the Economic Matters committee,

The Office of Social Equity (OSE) submits testimony in support of Senate Bill 594. OSE is supportive of the provisions outlined in the bill and appreciates its effort to modernize cannabis advertising standards while preserving appropriate public health and safety protections.

OSE supports the changes to the editorial content exception under Section 36–903(b)(4)(II), which now limits the exception to unpaid editorial coverage. This change appropriately closes a potential pay-for-coverage loophole and strengthens the integrity of the bill's consumer protection framework without imposing undue burdens on licensees

OSE also supports the removal of the definition of “therapeutic or medical claims.” A statutory definition risks narrowing how both the Maryland Cannabis Administration and the industry can operate, potentially limiting the ability of licenses to communicate clearly and accurately about their products. Through an equity lens, this constraint may disproportionately impact smaller and emerging social equity licensees that rely on transparent communication to build trust and compete.

For these reasons, the Office of Social Equity urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 0594. OSE provides this information to assist the Committee in evaluating SB 0594. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (443) 610-1666 or audrey.johnson1@maryland.gov, or Courtney Davis, Deputy Director, at (443) 610-1730 or courtney.davis@maryland.gov.

Audrey Johnson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Audrey Johnson".

Executive Director, Office of Social Equity