



Testimony - SB 54, State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners - Grounds for
Disciplinary Action - Restrictions
Favorable
House Environment & Transportation Committee
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Christopher C. Cano, MPA
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairman Korman & House Environment and Transportation Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents thousands of public sector workers and professionals across Maryland, including licensed and credentialed employees who are subject to professional discipline boards and evolving regulatory frameworks. We support SB 54 because it provides clear, common-sense protections for licensed professionals in a state where cannabis is legal, while preserving professional standards and public safety.

SB 54 appropriately prohibits the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners from taking adverse disciplinary action against a licensee solely for discussing or recommending cannabis or cannabidiol products for potential therapeutic or health supplementation purposes. This narrow and carefully drafted protection ensures that veterinarians are not punished for engaging in good-faith, evidence-informed conversations with clients—conversations that reflect the legal reality of cannabis in Maryland.

More broadly, this bill reflects an important principle for workers and professionals across the state: legal conduct and lawful professional speech should not be grounds for discipline or job loss. In a state that has legalized cannabis for both medical and adult-use, workers should not be forced to navigate vague or outdated enforcement regimes that expose them to adverse employment actions simply for acknowledging or discussing legal products. SB 54 provides clarity, fairness, and due process—values that are essential to protecting workers' livelihoods.

Importantly, SB 54 does not weaken professional accountability. The Board retains full authority to discipline veterinarians for negligence, incompetence, or misconduct. The bill simply draws a necessary line between legitimate regulation and punitive enforcement disconnected from public policy and current law.

SEIU Local 500 believes this legislation sets an important precedent for protecting licensed professionals from unjust discipline while respecting the will of Maryland voters and lawmakers who have legalized cannabis. We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 54 and hope that the General Assembly will address the greater need for clear worker protections against adverse employment actions around cannabis use. Thank you to Senator Lam for leading on this important issue

Thank you for your time and consideration.