



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Sponsor Testimony in Support of SB527
Public Health – Ibogaine Clinical Research Grant Program – Establishment
(Veterans Mental Health Innovations Act)
February 24, 2026

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes, and Members of the Finance committee,

A consequence of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that hundreds of thousands of U.S. Service Members sustained and returned home with traumatic brain injuries (TBI). Repeated blast exposure can result in changes to brain function, leaving veterans with chronic symptoms including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), and anxiety disorders.

Veterans often struggle to find effective treatment for their conditions, resulting in pain, suffering, and self-harm. Veterans make up about 20% of suicides in the United States despite making up only around 7% of the nation's population.

Continued research is needed and ongoing to develop and improve clinically sound treatments to support service members who have sustained traumatic brain injuries. Among those potentially promising treatments are Ibogaine. Ibogaine is a naturally occurring psychoactive compound derived from the root bark of the Iboga plant. Multiple studies have found that Ibogaine treatments have significant impacts on decreasing disability associated with PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Ibogaine has also shown an ability to combat substance use disorder.

SB 527 will (1) establish the Ibogaine Clinical Research Grant Program (Program). The program will (2) provide grants to research institutions in the State of Maryland to conduct clinical drug development trials on the use of Ibogaine.

SB 527 (3) establishes specific criteria to be eligible to receive grant funding, (4) requires that eligible research institutions match state grant funds, (5) requires that grant funds only be used to conduct clinical trials on the use of Ibogaine to treat Opioid Use Disorder and Neurological conditions, (6) requires that grant recipients send quarterly financial and progress reports, and (7) allows grant recipients to sign an agreement with a consortium established by another state to conduct Ibogaine clinical trials.

SB 527 (8) authorizes the Program to use funding from the Opioid Restitution Fund (Fund), (9) requires a \$500,000 appropriation in the annual budget bill from the Fund for fiscal years 2028-2030. 3 grants may be awarded annually to eligible research institutions. A report shall be issued to the legislature annually.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 527.