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Testimony from the Maryland State Chapter of the
National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML)

SUPPORT SB0439
**Employment Discrimination - Fire and Rescue Public Safety Employees -
Use of Medical Cannabis**

Disclosure Statement: Maryland NORML has no paid staff – we are entirely energized by a core group of citizen volunteers and more than 5,000 other Marylanders committed to ending marijuana prohibition and establishing a regulated cannabis commercial market for adults. I have never had any stake or investment of any kind in any cannabis enterprise, nor does anyone in my family, and I have never received any fee or remuneration for consulting with any cannabis enterprise. As an organization, we have worked to reform state and federal marijuana laws for more than 50 years.

Maryland NORML strongly supports Senate Bill 439 and emphasizes the importance of distinguishing **impairment detection from mere evidence of past consumption**. Testing methods for cannabis identify inactive metabolites that can remain in the body for days or weeks after lawful use and do not indicate whether an individual is impaired while on duty.

SB0439 appropriately protects fire and rescue personnel from discipline based solely on a valid medical cannabis certification or a positive test reflecting lawful off-duty use, while explicitly preserving employer authority to prohibit on-duty use and impairment.

Maryland NORML strongly supports the adoption of evidence-based impairment detection measures, including performance-based assessments and validated field protocols, rather than reliance on consumption-based testing that can punish unimpaired employees. Public safety is best served by identifying actual impairment — not lawful medical treatment taken outside working hours.

Firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics deserve both safe workplaces and access to medically appropriate care. SB0439 advances both goals.

For these reasons and more, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0439.

M. Luke Jones, Maryland NORML