



February 5, 2026

The Honorable Melissa R. Wells
Chair, House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 0108 – Letter of Information

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kenneth P. Kerr, and Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

The Office of Social Equity (OSE) respectfully submits this letter regarding House Bill 0108. OSE was established to ensure that communities disproportionately harmed by cannabis criminalization are able to meaningfully participate in Maryland's legal cannabis industry and benefit from the revenues generated under legalization.

OSE is funded through cannabis tax revenues and is responsible for administering and overseeing programs that promote equitable ownership, workforce development, technical assistance, and access to capital for social equity applicants. These funds support licensing assistance, business development services, and long-term efforts to repair harms caused by prior cannabis enforcement policies.

OSE supports the intent of House Bill 0108 and appreciates the General Assembly's commitment to expanding opportunities and support for individuals returning from incarceration. However, we wish to inform the Committee that, as currently drafted, the bill would alter the purposes of the Cannabis Regulation and Enforcement Fund — the same revenue source that funds OSE's operations and programming. As a result, implementation of this legislation may have an unintended impact on OSE's ability to fully carry out its statutory mandate.

Because OSE's work is directly tied to the availability and stability of these funds, any reduction or reallocation from this revenue source could limit program capacity, delay service delivery, or constrain support for social equity licensees and impacted communities. We raise this concern not in opposition to the bill, but to ensure the Committee is fully informed of the potential fiscal and operational implications as it considers the measure.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this information and remain committed to working collaboratively with the General Assembly to advance policies that strengthen Maryland's cannabis framework while preserving critical investments in social equity.

I hope this information is useful. If you would like to discuss this 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.

Sincerely,

Audrey Johnson
Executive Director
Office of Social Equity