

Testimony in Support of SB327

Criminal Law - Drug Paraphernalia and Controlled Paraphernalia Prohibitions – Repeal FAVORABLE

February 3, 2026

The Honorable Senator William C. Smith, Jr., Chairman; Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair; and esteemed members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

I am writing to ask you to vote in favor of SB327. This bill repeals Maryland's paraphernalia and controlled paraphernalia laws, removing penalties for paraphernalia and thereby ending law enforcement actions based on drug paraphernalia alone.

SB327 is a common-sense bill that prioritizes the health and safety of all Marylanders. Paraphernalia laws criminalize legal, everyday objects, such as small plastic bags, spoons, and scales. Syringes are used for a multitude of legal purposes and can be purchased legally at a pharmacy without a prescription. Under current law, these items become illegal when associated with suspected drugs, even if no drugs are present. Legal items should remain legal.

Evidence shows decriminalization will enhance public safety while strengthening Maryland's overdose prevention efforts. It would promote the safe disposal of syringes, [reducing litter](#) and enhancing safety in public spaces. Removing the fear of arrest for paraphernalia [would reduce risky behavior](#) among drug users, such as sharing syringes and needles, and would reduce the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C. And according to a review conducted by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, syringe access programs [do not increase drug use or injection frequency, while reducing HIV transmission and risky injection behaviors](#).

Twenty states have already decriminalized syringe possession for personal use. Now Maryland needs to do the same: treat addiction and substance abuse as public health issues rather than criminal matters, and repeal penalties for paraphernalia. For these reasons, I urge the Committee to vote favorably on SB327.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda Littell

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