



**Maryland Commission  
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

**Bill Title:** Drug Paraphernalia and Controlled Paraphernalia - Repeal

**Bill Number(s):** [HB0551/SB0327](#)

**Position:** FAVORABLE

**Date:** February 3, 2026

**Submitted by:** Director Jeremy Browning on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

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**To:**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

The Hon. William C. Smith, Chair  
The Hon. J. Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair

**House Judiciary Committee**

The Hon. J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair  
The Hon. Debra Davis, Vice Chair

**Testimony on Behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Commission strongly supports HB551/SB327, which would repeal the prohibition against the possession and use of syringes. This critical measure is an overdue step toward advancing public health, reducing harm, and addressing the disproportionate criminalization of marginalized communities, including LGBTQIA+ Marylanders.

For transgender and gender-diverse individuals, particularly those undergoing gender-affirming hormone therapy (GAHT), access to sterile syringes is a medical necessity. Current laws that classify syringes as drug paraphernalia may result in transgender Marylanders being unjustly targeted. By decriminalizing possession, HB551/SB327 helps ensure that individuals can carry and obtain necessary medical equipment, for any reason, without fear of legal repercussions.

Beyond LGBTQIA+ communities, this bill promotes broader public health goals by reducing the risks of syringe-sharing and related health complications, such as HIV and hepatitis

transmission. Criminalizing harm reduction tools only exacerbates public health crises rather than addressing them.

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs urges a favorable report on HB551/SB327 as a necessary step toward health equity, harm reduction, and the protection of basic human rights.