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February 6, 2026

The Honorable Sandy Bartlett
Chairwoman, House Judiciary Committee
Taylor House Office Building, Room 100
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SUPPORT of House Bill 551
(Criminal Law - Drug Paraphernalia and Controlled Paraphernalia Prohibitions
- Repeal) - FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and House Judiciary Committee Members,

Legal Action Center strongly supports House Bill 551 (Criminal Law - Drug Paraphernalia and Controlled Paraphernalia Prohibitions - Repeal), which will end all penalties for drug paraphernalia. This is a common-sense, evidence-based bill that prioritizes the health and safety of all Marylanders.

Legal Action Center is a nonprofit organization that uses legal and policy strategies to fight discrimination, build health equity, and restore opportunity for people with prior involvement in the criminal legal system, substance use disorders, and HIV/AIDS.

As an organization, we support policies that create environments that restore opportunities and build health equity while prioritizing care over criminalization. Addiction and substance use disorder must be treated with a public health approach, not a criminal one. Removing the State penalties for paraphernalia prioritizes the health, dignity, and safety of people who use drugs.

Legal Action Center believes that this bill will simplify Maryland's criminal law, improve our state's infectious disease and overdose prevention response, and keep legally obtained items legal. **We ask that the House Judiciary Committee give HB551 a favorable report.**

For more information about this position, please contact Teresa Miller at tmiller@lac.org.

Sincerely,
Teresa Miller
Teresa Miller
National Director of Health Initiatives
Legal Action Center