



March 10, 2026

**House Judiciary Committee
TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION**

*HB 1386 - Criminal Law - Distribution of Heroin or Fentanyl Causing Death or Serious Bodily Injury
(Victoria, Scottie, Ashleigh, and Yader's Law)*

A grass-roots, faith expansive community coming together in the name of healing and human flourishing, Good Trouble Church is a ministry centering love and freedom, leadership and liberation, community care, and sacred ceremony. Started by those who have been made vulnerable by systemic racism and the war on drugs, Good Trouble Church places harm reduction at the center of everything we do.

Good Trouble Church strongly opposes strongly opposes HB 1386 - Criminal Law - Distribution of Heroin or Fentanyl Causing Serious Bodily Injury or Death (Victoria, Scottie, Ashleigh, and Yader's Law). This bill would create harsh new penalties for individuals found liable for distributing heroin or fentanyl if someone gets seriously hurt or dies after using the drugs. This approach of increasing prison sentences to address problems related to drug use has been tried before and has never worked. We urge the General Assembly to instead focus on proven solutions that prevent overdose like evidence-based substance use treatment.

HB 1386 is a well-intentioned response to Maryland's overdose crisis, but it will have the unintended consequences of making a fatal overdose more likely for more Maryland families. Laws like HB 1386, often called drug-induced homicide (DIH) laws, do not discourage drug use, deter drug dealing, or reduce the prevalence of fentanyl in the drug supply. HB 1386 will instead lead to further mass incarceration and ballooning state prison costs.

DIH laws like HB 1386 discourage reporting potentially reversible overdoses due to fear of DIH prosecution. This year's law includes no Good Samaritan protections for individuals potentially liable under the bill even if they report the overdose in good faith. Stories of harsh penalties and DIH prosecutions will circulate and will lead people who use drugs to be hesitant to reach out for help. This could make Maryland's overdose crisis worse at a time when we are finally seeing progress in preventing fatal overdose.

Good Trouble Church works on a daily basis to improve both individual and community well-being in the Station North neighborhood of Baltimore City. The majority of our staff, volunteers, and members have lived experience with substance use, be it personal or a close friend/family member. Every time a community member that receives punishment via incarceration instead of care creates a gap in our community. HB 1386 would only widen those gaps adding to the legacy of trauma experienced within in our community as a result of punitive drug war policy. HB 1386 will not make our community safer, but it will rip our family, friends and loved-ones away from us.

The General Assembly should focus on investments in prevention and treatment rather than new harsh penalties.

Good Trouble Church urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to oppose HB 1386.

Thank You,
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