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Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Health and Government Operations
Committee

Chair

Health Occupations and
Long-Term Care Subcommittee

House Chair

Joint Committee on Administrative,
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Testimony of Delegate Samuel I Rosenberg

Before the Judiciary Committee

In Support of

House Bill 1361

Criminal Law – Controlled Substances and Criminal Organizations

Chair Bartlett and Members of the Committee:

House Bill 1361 is a commonsense fix to help Maryland prosecutors, courts, and law enforcement handle complex drug and criminal organizations more efficiently. This bill addresses three gaps in current law.

First, the bill provides that in a certain conspiracy involving controlled dangerous substances, the conspiracy has the same penalty as the underlying crime. Second, it provides for a clear framework to prosecute multi-jurisdiction conspiracies together when deemed appropriate. Third, it clarifies that venue laws also apply to underlying crimes committed in furtherance of a criminal organization. Addressing these three gaps will allow prosecutors to come to more consistent outcomes in complex drug conspiracy cases.

This bill reduces duplication across the judicial system while providing fiscal and operational benefits through fewer redundant judicial proceedings, fewer appearances and trial prep for law enforcement, lab technicians, and expert witnesses.

Oftentimes, narcotics distribution in Baltimore City is a part of a larger drug trafficking operation. These operations may function at all hours of the day and can involve multiple members of the conspiracy on the street at once, distributing to buyers. These operations typically involve keeping a supply of controlled dangerous substances nearby in stash houses, residences, or storage units in distinct locations. These locations may also be used to store proceeds and weapons as well as to manufacture and package controlled dangerous substances for street-level sales. This of course leads to seizures of evidence of the conspiracy, in separate venues from where the street operation functions, in different jurisdictions. There are many instances of conspiracies that distribute controlled dangerous substances in Baltimore City, while operating stash houses in Baltimore and Howard Counties.

In these cases, the public interest is best served when the justice system can address the full scope of the conspiracy cohesively rather than through scattered charges across venues. For these reasons, **I urge a favorable report on House Bill 1361.**

March 10th, 2026