

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,

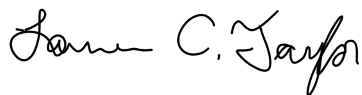
Nursing Students for Harm Reduction, a group of 126 current nursing students at Johns Hopkins University, strongly supports House Bill 551 (Criminal Law - Drug Paraphernalia and Controlled Paraphernalia Prohibitions - Repeal) which will end all penalties for drug paraphernalia. This is a common-sense, evidence-based bill that prioritizes the health and safety of all Marylanders.

Nursing Students for Harm Reduction was founded over 10 years ago to help prevent fatal overdoses, combat stigma, and prepare nurses to deliver compassionate, excellent care to people who use drugs. Despite important progress in reducing fatal overdoses, far too many people are still getting sick and dying from complications of drug use. I currently work in an ICU and just the other day was caring for someone fighting an infection of their brain and spine tissue after sharing syringes. The criminalization of safer use supplies causes harm and gets in the way of common-sense public health efforts to reduce illness, pain and death. It also disproportionately harms people of color who are more likely to be stopped and searched.

We believe 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 House Bill 551 a favorable report.**

For more information about this position, please contact Lauren Taylor at ltayl103@jh.edu or laurenctaylor@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Lauren Taylor
President
Nursing Students for Harm Reduction
Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
Baltimore, MD 21231