

TESTIMONY SB-0356

Submitted by Warden Michael Capasso, Harford County Sheriff's Office, Maryland

Greetings members of the Senate, I am Michael Capasso, Warden of the Harford County Sheriff's Office Detention Center under Sheriff Jeffery Gahler. I am here in support of SB-0356 and I am thankful for the introduction of this BILL.

It is only logical to ensure any substance containing even a degree of cannabis does not enter a correctional facility. It is the sworn duty of correctional officers to prohibit it and is a portion of the mission of the entire corrections arena. Why one may ask, because the introduction of such a substance would cause a threat to the general order of any correctional facility. As you could imagine, any CDS would be considered a commodity by the inmate population, and in this environment it would be hoarded, stolen, traded, bargained, and abused. This would certainly result in assaults, fights, and unrest. It is vital that a safe and secure environment be maintained in a correctional facility and this BILL helps ensure that.

Correctional facilities offer a multitude of programs to the inmate population, programs that address faith, behavior, education, and ADDICTIONS. You see - We do everything we can to prevent an inmate's continuance of CDS usage and abuse. Harford County Sheriff's Office, as some other counties, has an SBU, a Substance Abuse & Behavioral Health Unit which focuses on the burden of addictions. These units treat inmates for CDS addictions and educate them on how to no longer use CDS, these units don't treat inmates with CDS.

Cannabis is certainly not the only avenue available in addressing pain management and it should not become one inside the walls of any corrections facility. Medical authorities currently limit the usage of potentially habitual medications for a good reason. Society needs to take steps forward and not take the easy way out by giving in and essentially encouraging inmates to use cannabis. We in the correctional field strive to release inmates better conditioned to be productive members of society NOT to walk around aimlessly in a cloud influenced by cannabis.

Thank you members of the Senate for listening and thank you Senate BILL 356