

Testimony on Maryland Senate Bill SB0784

Bill Name: De Minimis Quantity

TO: Senator William C. Smith, Chair, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Jocelyn Carter Jackson, Silver Spring, Montgomery County

DATE: March 8, 2022

POSITION: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation. Progressive Maryland is a grassroots, nonprofit organization with nine chapters from Frederick to the Lower Shore and more than 100,000 members and supporters who live in nearly every legislative district in the state. Also, there are dozens of affiliated community, faith, and labor organizations across the state that stand behind our work. Our mission is to improve the lives of working families in Maryland. Please note our strong support for this bill.

I'm a member on Progressive Maryland's Drug Policy Task Force. We envision a society where there is equal opportunity for the health, dignity, and safety of people targeted by the war on drugs. We believe that harm reduction is a part of a broader movement for racial and social justice.

[How has incarcerating people for having small amounts of drugs on them impacted you, your family, or your friends?] My ex-husband was in and out of jail for years and went through numerous drug rehab programs. I think having him in jail for long periods of time hurt our family and forced me to be a single parent to our girls. It also led to our divorce after 15yrs. I had to move many times because I was unable to pay for the apartments, we lived in on a single person's salary as well as pay for daycare.

[How does not incarcerating people for having small amounts of drugs on them bring restorative justice to the War on Drugs?] If certain drugs were legal then the user would not have to worry about being arrested for this.

This makes this rule equal among everyone and not to hurt just one group of people.

We urge a favorable report on this legislation.

**Sincerely,
Jocelyn Carter Jackson**