

Support for SB1009

Good afternoon. My name is Eileen Brewer, I live in Columbia Maryland and I'm here to ask you to support SB 1009. I am the board president of Clusterbusters, a nonprofit organization that supports people with cluster headache, one of the most painful conditions known to medicine. For the past 20 years, Clusterbusters has been collaborating with researchers at leading universities, including Harvard and Yale, to prove that psychedelic substances like psilocybin are some of the most effective treatments for cluster headache. Because of our education and work, thousands of people with cluster headache are safely and effectively taking natural psychedelic medicines in their homes.

Psychedelics are substances that, when ingested by people, cause altered perceptions. Many who try them say that they come away with a deeper understanding of the world and their place in it. The substances listed in this bill include psilocybin, a compound in some mushrooms, mescaline, a compound in some cacti, and DMT, a compound found in humans, some other animals, and many plants.

These substances are basically impossible to overdose on and the risk of addiction is very low. However, they are powerful and there are many considerations for how safe access can be implemented. A Task Force of experts is an effective way to review research and approaches of other states and make recommendations for Maryland policies.

Public support for psychedelic access is widespread and growing. In these partisan times, it's noteworthy that many of the psychedelic bills in other states have garnered bipartisan and overwhelming support. The House version of this bill passed yesterday 136-1.

I'm not just a policy advocate for psychedelic substances, they have transformed my life. I am sitting before you today without pain after living with it constantly and relentlessly for more than 30 years. I tried to take my life twice during that time to escape the suffering. I didn't have much of a life during those times anyway. The work of Clusterbusters and others in the psychedelic space combined with personal exploration led me to find a treatment that works and a life worth living, but I had to break the law to do it. No one should have to risk going to jail for trying to heal. Prohibition and the War on Drugs is a failed experiment and we need to now look to common sense education and policies to help people have safe access to treatments for

medical and mental health purposes, as well as the freedom of spiritual and personal growth that some find with these substances.