



The Garden International, LLC
11890 Old Baltimore Pike, Ste G
Beltsville, MD 20705
info@thegarden.farm
301) 957-4258

March 14, 2024

**Senate Bill 1009- Task Force on Responsible Use of Natural Psychedelic Substances
House Health, and Government Operations Committee**

Position: Support

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

The Garden International is a mushroom farm located in Prince George’s County. At The Garden, our mission is to ‘plantify’ the world. We strive to build restorative, and sustainable systems that work in harmony with nature. We feel strongly that the tides are turning, and it is time to cultivate ecosystems that feed local communities and the economy. The Garden International writes to support Senate Bill 1009– Task Force on Responsible Use of Natural Psychedelic Substances. If enacted, the legislation will contribute to our mission of the good use of natural resources to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the Earth and all its inhabitants.

Senate Bill 1009 would enforce public health and safety by establishing a task force to study the responsible use of these substances is timely and necessary. There is a growing body of scientific research indicating the potential benefits of psychedelic substances in treating a range of mental health disorders, including depression, PTSD, and substance use disorders, among others. By focusing on naturally derived substances and excluding peyote to respect Native American traditions, the bill thoroughly navigates the complex landscape of psychedelic substances.

The comprehensive composition of the task force, as outlined in the bill, ensures a multifaceted approach to the study. Including representatives from various sectors--- healthcare, law enforcement, academia, and directly affected individuals—promises a balanced and thorough examination of issues at hand. This diversity is crucial for crafting policies that are not only scientifically sound but also socially equitable and culturally sensitive.

The potential benefits of responsibly integrating natural psychedelic substances into our healthcare and social systems are immense. Not only could this lead to breakthroughs in the treatment of challenging mental health conditions, but it could also contribute to a more nuanced, informed public discourse on drug use and addiction.

This bill establishes necessary measures to significantly improve our approach to public health, substance use treatment, and drug policy reform. By establishing the Task Force on Responsible Use of Natural Psychedelic Substances, Maryland can pave the way for responsible, evidence-

based innovations that benefit all members of our society. Therefore, we respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 1009.

For more information call or email:

Therese M. Hessler, Ashlar Government Relations | 301-503-2576 | therese@ashlargr.com