

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORT
2023 Legislative Session

Reference No.:	CB-088-2023
Draft No.:	2
Committee:	GOFP
Date:	09/28/2023
Action:	FAV w/ Amendments

REPORT: Committee Vote: Favorable 5-0 In favor: Council Members Burroughs, Oriadha, Fisher, Harrison, and Ivey

The Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee met on September 28, 2023, to consider CB-88-2023, proposed by Council Member Oriadha. This Bill establishes the Cannabis Reinvestment and Restoration Committee and the Community Reinvestment and Repair Special Revenue Fund to receive and distribute funds from the State's Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund to areas that cannabis-related practices have heavily impacted. This Bill establishes the terms for membership, compensation, meeting standards, and duties for the commission and the purpose and operation of the special revenue fund.

The Bill sponsor emphasized the intent to generate revenue and create new businesses through cannabis legalization. However, concerns exist about unintended adverse effects on lower economic communities of color. It's essential to address these concerns and ensure equitable outcomes. CB-88-2023 seeks to establish a permanent Board responsible for distributing the funds from the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund to the adversely impacted communities.

The Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement indicates that the enactment of CB-88-2023 will have an adverse financial impact on the County due to the administrative costs of forming and maintaining this commission. As provided in the Bill and pursuant to State law, funds received from the State CRRF may be used for related administrative expenses. Otherwise, funding received from the

State will be used to provide grant funding for community-based initiatives in low-income areas and areas that cannabis enforcement practices have heavily impacted.

The enactment of CB-88-2023 is likely to have a favorable indirect impact through the provision of money generated from the sale of cannabis products in the form of grants to community organizations in resource-limited geographic areas. This should have a restorative effect in those communities, boosting property values and increasing economic activity while reducing demand for law enforcement and social services.

Public testimony was heard from representatives from the ACLU of Maryland, and Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle expressed support for CB-88-2023, emphasizing the legislation’s potential benefits for the citizens of Prince George’s County. Their testimony reflects the proposed bill's positive reception and perceived advantages to the community.

The Office of Law finds it in proper legislative form with no legal impediments to enactment. The Office of Law provided suggested technical amendments:

- Page 1, line 19, remove “Section 10-348 through 10-305” and add “Section 10-348 through 10-350”.
- Page 3, line 23, remove “ex office” and add “ex officio”.

The Administration expressed support for CB-88-2023 and suggested amending it to create a 13-member Board, including the addition of the DCAO for Public Safety and Homeland Security. This change would grant the County Executive the authority to appoint four members to the Board. The Administration representative believes that having the entity related to Public Safety on the Board would be beneficial, especially given the disparities in specific areas related to possession charges.

The Bill sponsor was not open to the suggested amendments and believed there would be an opportunity for Public Safety to contribute their expertise, even though the legislation’s intent is not to involve Public Safety in the decision-making process.

The Bill sponsor reiterated the proposed amendments:

On Page 2, line 25 – add language that includes “economic uplift.”

On Page 3, line 14, the language needs to be clear if it is one member representative or nine members representing the councilmanic districts.

On page 5, line 18, after the word public, delete the words grant application... public process.

On page 5, line 26 (b), after the word of, delete grant... awards.

The Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee voted 5-0 favorably as amended on CB-88-2023.

