



Bucks County Association of Township Officials

P.O. Box 856 · Doylestown, PA 18901
Phone: (267) 685-6280 · Website: www.bcato.org

May 26, 2015

Honorable Matthew E. Baker
213 Ryan Office Building
PO Box 202068
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2068

RE: SB0003 – BCATO Position Paper

Dear Representative Baker,

Please allow this letter to serve as the official position of the Bucks County Association of Township Officials (BCATO) in regards to Senate Bill 3 (Medical Cannabis Act) – an Act providing for the medical use of cannabis in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. BCATO is comprised of 30 townships of the second class and represents the legislative interests of its supervisors, managers, tax collectors and auditors.

BCATO's primary support extends to federal legislation that would reschedule marijuana from a Schedule I to a Schedule II classification under the Controlled Substances Act, which would enable research into the medicinal properties of marijuana. We feel that there is a greater benefit in pursuing a federal change since it would provide the same result as the Medical Cannabis Act without creating an unnecessary system.

In the interim, we believe the Medical Cannabis Act is a solid push to provide the necessary help for our residents with specific medical symptoms, but there is concern about the clarity regarding the 65 licenses allotted both to Medical Cannabis Growers and Processors and 130 licenses allotted to Medical Cannabis Dispensers. In the bill it is stated that licensees shall be geographically dispersed throughout this Commonwealth, but it does not state if this is a regional or county allotment and how this is determined.

Also, we have concerns about the potential zoning issues that may arise with passage of this legislation, specifically on two issues. The first issue pertains to Medical Cannabis Dispensers and a board having the authority to adjust or waive the prohibition of "[being] located within 1,000 feet of the property line of a public, private or parochial school or a day-care center."

The second issue relates to the following sentences in the bill:

- Facilities for the growing or processing of medical cannabis shall meet the same municipal zoning and land use requirements as other manufacturing, preparation and production facilities.
- Facilities for the dispensing of medical cannabis shall meet the same municipal zoning and land use requirements as other commercial facilities.

We believe that local municipalities should be able to have stronger zoning controls for determining the location of any facility that grows, processes or dispenses medical cannabis; and we strongly oppose having a board affecting or determining a municipality's zoning decision in any regard.

We support this legislation's intent, but with our concerns we would ask that you discuss these concerns further before moving forward to appease our concerns for our municipalities.

Respectfully,

Daniel F. Rattigan
President, BCATO

cc: Honorable Robert M. Tomlinson
Honorable Charles T. McIlhinney Jr.
Honorable Stewart J. Greenleaf
Honorable Bob Mensch
Honorable Gene DiGirolamo
Honorable Bernard T. O'Neill
Honorable Steve Santarsiero
Honorable John T. Galloway
Honorable Tina Davis
Honorable Frank A. Farry
Honorable Marguerite Quinn
Honorable Katharine M. Watson
Honorable Scott A. Petri
Honorable Craig T. Staats
David M. Sanko