

## Zoning Text Amendment 25-07, Retail Sales and Service - Cannabis Dispensary

I have owned, with my partner the Rev. Doctor Leslie Westbrook, the home at [REDACTED] Farragut Ave Kensington, Maryland 20895 from July 1994 to the present. During most of that time on the other side of our backyard boundary to the north there has been a bank at 3740 University Blvd., Kensington, Maryland. The bank moved recently and now Crabtree Dispensary, LLC, is preparing to start selling cannabis in August at that location. Maryland Cannabis Administration says "a cannabis business will not receive final licensure or the ability to operate unless they have received all the required permits from the jurisdiction they intend to operate, zoning use, and has passed all inspections, both local and required by the MCA." As far as I know, the county has not yet granted Crabtree Dispensary, LLC a zoning permit. Nevertheless, Crabtree Dispensary, LLC, is preparing the building to start selling cannabis in August at that location. I see construction crews working on the building and ads inviting people to apply for jobs working at the Dispensary in August.

This building is less than one hundred feet from our home. It is less than one hundred feet from our bedroom.

Under Maryland Law, local jurisdictions may pass an ordinance to establish a 100 feet distance requirement between dispensaries and areas zoned for residential use only.

I ask the County Council to pass such an ordinance. I have several reasons.

First is safety. Federal law prohibits the possession of marijuana. (21 U.S.C. Section 844) Likewise, federal law bans distribution or trafficking of marijuana. This deters banks from offering services to cannabis dispensaries businesses due to the risk of federal prosecution and stringent regulatory compliance requirements. Consequently, dispensaries face limited access to banking services, forcing them to rely on cash transactions. This cash-only model results in security risks, because dispensaries store large sums of cash onsite. Just like banks that steer clear of dispensaries, some big-name security companies, like ADT, for example, also shy away from partnering with such businesses, citing the federal illegality of marijuana. As a result, the armed security guards in cannabis dispensaries may have little training or experience in the task of "meeting firepower with firepower to deter, defuse, or directly engage with any hostile force." (This is a direct quote from a website offering rent-a-cops for dispensaries.) No doubt the cannabis lobby will claim that their guards will be highly trained professionals, and this might be true for the first few months, but what will happen in a year or two?

Second is noise. My understanding is that the Dispensary will be open until 9:00 PM each night. The building has a driving in window, and when the bank was there we could clearly hear the transactions at the window. However, the Bank closed at 5:00 PM.

Third is property values. I fear that the value of my home will decrease by thousands of dollars, if this Dispensary opens. I do not plan to sell my home in the near future, but this could have a serious impact on my retirement. I am not a wealthy person and currently I am still doing Interim Ministries at the age of 74 to support my family.

Lastly, although I no longer have young children but there are many in the neighborhood. I do not want them to have easy access to marijuana.

For these reasons I ask you to pass an ordinance to establish a 100 feet distance requirement between dispensaries and areas zoned for residential use only.