



The Maryland State Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410.539.0872
Fax: 410.547.0915
1.800.492.1056
www.medchi.org

Senate Finance Committee

February 24, 2026

Senate Bill 527 – *Public Health – Ibogaine Clinical Research Grant Program – Establishment (Veterans Mental Health Innovations Act)*

POSITION: OPPOSE

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, respectfully **opposes** Senate Bill 527.

Senate Bill 527 establishes an Ibogaine Clinical Research Grant Program within the Maryland Department of Health to fund U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) clinical trials studying ibogaine for opioid use disorder and certain neurological conditions, using Opioid Restitution Fund dollars. The bill authorizes time-limited grants to eligible Maryland research institutions and requires reporting to the General Assembly on study progress and outcomes.

Maryland’s physicians remain committed to addressing opioid use disorder, veteran mental health challenges, and the ongoing overdose crisis. We strongly support rigorous scientific research into safe and effective treatments. However, Senate Bill 527 would allocate Opioid Restitution Fund dollars to support clinical drug development trials for ibogaine, a substance with a limited evidence base and a documented history of significant safety concerns, before sufficient foundational data have established an acceptable risk profile.

Ibogaine is not approved by the FDA for any medical use. Published research has identified serious safety concerns associated with its use, particularly effects on the heart. Medical case reports and toxicology reviews have also documented deaths occurring after ibogaine use, often involving heart-related complications or interactions with other substances. These risks are especially concerning for individuals with opioid use disorder, who may have underlying health conditions, ongoing substance use, or be taking medications that can also affect heart rhythm.

At a time when Maryland continues to face record numbers of overdose deaths, workforce shortages, and limited access to established overdose treatments, MedChi believes that opioid abatement funds should be directed toward scalable interventions with demonstrated safety and effectiveness.

Allocating \$500,000 annually in Opioid Restitution Fund dollars to support early-phase clinical research may divert resources from community-based prevention, treatment access, recovery services, and harm reduction efforts that have established efficacy and immediate impact. Until stronger evidence is available, dedicating state opioid settlement funds to this bill’s purpose is premature.

For these reasons, MedChi requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 527.

For more information call:

Christine K. Krone
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Andrew G. Vetter
410-244-7000