

Introduced by: Councilmember Seamens

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION 2014-8**

**OMNIBUS RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR 2014 MARYLAND STATE  
LEGISLATION [ESTABLISHING A BEVERAGE CONTAINER REDEMPTION, RULE  
SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT, AND MARIJUANA LAW REFORM]**

- WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park wishes to take positions on legislation, of direct concern to the city and its residents, before the Maryland General Assembly during the legislature's 2014 session; and
- WHEREAS, such legislation includes a bottle bill (Senate Bill 394), reform of the state's marijuana laws, and facilitation of local business investment, all of direct concern to the city and its residents; and
- WHEREAS, SB 394, the Statewide Container Recycling Refund Program would require a redeemable beverage container sold in the state to indicate a refund value and provisions for redemption of such containers; and
- WHEREAS, SB 394 would boost recycling rates and reduce litter, both matters of established city policy, without placing a significant burden on the city or its residents; and
- WHEREAS, economic development – support for local businesses and jobs and shopping – is of keen interest to the City of Takoma Park and the local community, creating opportunity for residents and businesses alike and enhancing the livability and the local business climate; and
- WHEREAS, members of the Takoma Park community, who represent or are affiliated with organizations that include the Old Takoma Business Association, the Crossroads Community Food Network, and the Takoma Foundation, have been pursuing approaches that facilitate local investment in local small businesses and have identified ability of individuals to provide small loans, and of local small businesses to accept such loans, as one promising mechanism; and
- WHEREAS, District 20 Senator Jamie Raskin and Delegate Tom Hucker have, at the behest of the Takoma Park advocates, introduced Senate Bill 811/House Bill 1243 entitled Corporations and Associations – Maryland Securities Act – Registration and Filing Exemptions, to allow Maryland businesses to accept crowd-funded loans of not more than \$100 each, totaling up to \$100,000 per year, and the Takoma Park advocates have asked the City Council to endorse the bills; and
- WHEREAS, current criminal penalties for the possession of marijuana for personal use, and the criminal economy created by the illegality of marijuana, create a great societal burden that disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities, in Montgomery County as everywhere else in the U.S, with consequences for individuals charged

with possession that may be life-long and life-altering far out of proportion to the gravity of the crime; and

WHEREAS, the creation of medical-marijuana dispensaries in Maryland and many other states, including in the District of Columbia, where the Takoma Wellness Center operates just outside Takoma Park's border, and the legalization of recreational marijuana in Colorado and pending licensing of legal marijuana sales in Washington state, have not created significant public-health impact nor detrimental societal costs; and

WHEREAS, failing the legalization of marijuana possession and the regulation and taxing of production and distribution, decriminalization would lessen the adverse and out-of-proportion impact of marijuana enforcement on all segments of society, and would decrease Takoma Park's enforcement costs; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 879, the Maryland Marijuana Decriminalization Act, introduced by District 20 Delegate Heather Mizeur and co-sponsored by District 20 Delegates Sheila Hixson and Tom Hucker, would replace the state's existing criminal penalty for possession of a small amount of marijuana with a civil offense for possession of 1 ounce or less; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park supports each piece of legislation cited in this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT the City of Takoma Park supports enactment of the following legislation and of cross-filed bills yet to be introduced in the House of Delegates or Senate:

- SB 394 – The Statewide Container Recycling Refund Program
- SB 811/HB 1243 – Corporations and Associations – Maryland Securities Act – Registration and Filing Exemptions
- HB 879 – The Maryland Marijuana Decriminalization Act

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Manager is directed to communicate the City's position, by simple letter or other means, to the members of the District 20 delegation.

Adopted this 18th day of February, 2014.

ATTEST:

  
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Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk