

OFFICE
OF SOCIAL
EQUITY

Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund Survey Results Report

DECEMBER 15, 2023

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Dear Mr. President, Madam Speaker, and Members of the General Assembly

DECEMBER 15, 2023

The *Cannabis Reform Act of 2023* requires the Office of Social Equity (OSE) to solicit public input on the use of Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) funding on or before November 1 and publish a review of the input received on or before December 15 of each year.

To that end, OSE is happy to present the attached report, which will serve to inform elected officials and their constituents as they craft strategies for CRRF allocation.

The report provides valuable insight into the viewpoints and preferences shared by one thousand two hundred eighty-five (1,285) Maryland residents regarding which type of community-based services and organizations should be the primary beneficiaries of CRRF funding.

The insights derived from the survey results emphasize the public's desire to allocate CRRF funds toward critical areas such as mental health and substance abuse programs, education, and housing and homelessness prevention services. The survey unveiled nuanced alignments and differences between the public's priorities and those of Maryland elected officials.

Both the public and elected officials prioritize mental health, education, and after-school programs; however, elected officials are placing greater emphasis on job training and workforce development while the public emphasizes housing and homelessness prevention.

One notable finding is that 74% of survey respondents expressed strong support for the reinvestment of cannabis tax revenue into communities that have been disproportionately harmed by the war on drugs. This endorsement represents a compelling mandate to prioritize the equitable distribution of resources within these historically impacted areas.

The report also highlights a keen desire for robust public participation in the CRRF allocation process, with 69% of respondents advocating for community involvement or establishing a local CRRF oversight committee. This underscores the community’s commitment to ensuring transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process.

We earnestly request your careful consideration of this report and its recommendations, as your attention to this matter will play a pivotal role in shaping a just and prosperous path forward for our communities. By working together, we can collaboratively establish an equitable, thriving, and inclusive cannabis industry within our state.

Sincerely,
Audrey Johnson
Executive Director
Office of Social Equity

The Honorable
William C. Ferguson, IV
President of the Senate
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable
Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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DECEMBER 15, 2023



Wes Moore
GOVERNOR



Aruna K. Miller
LT. GOVERNOR



Audrey Johnson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Submitted pursuant to § 1–309 of the Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland

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A Message from the Executive Director



I am pleased to present the findings from the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) Survey conducted by the Office of Social Equity (OSE). This comprehensive analysis reflects the collective voice of Maryland State residents, articulating their perspectives on the allocation of CRRF funds within their respective communities.

The report emphasizes the community's interest in ensuring that CRRF funds are distributed to organizations and services that actively uplift the community, and it highlights the need for equitable and strategic fund allocation at the local level.

As mandated by the *Cannabis Reform Act of 2023*, OSE remains steadfast in its mission to cultivate economic opportunity and foster equity within Maryland's adult-use cannabis market. Our unwavering dedication to empowering historically disadvantaged individuals and businesses seeking entry into this burgeoning industry remains the bedrock of our endeavors.

Providing support for community-based services and organizations is essential for the economic growth and development of communities that have been negatively impacted by the war on drugs. Working to destigmatize the cannabis industry is paramount to the successful use of the CRRF.

We are resolute in our pledge to assist the State in channeling resources towards equitable growth, thereby ensuring that the adult-use cannabis market reflects the inherent diversity of Maryland.

This report serves as a guidepost for informed decision-making and underscores the importance of inclusivity, equity, and community-driven initiatives in the allocation of CRRF funds.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration in advancing social equity and economic empowerment within our communities.

Warm regards,

Audrey Johnson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF SOCIAL EQUITY

Executive Summary

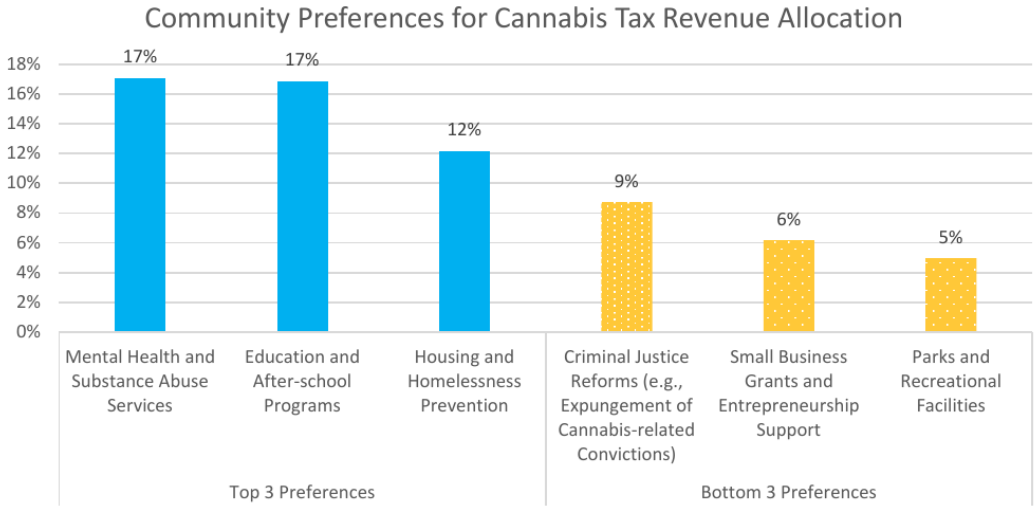
The *Cannabis Reform Act of 2023* mandates that on or before November 1 each year, OSE shall solicit public input on the uses of CRRF funds. A review of the input received will be shared with the General Assembly and made publicly accessible on or before December 15 of each year.[1] This report provides an analysis of the results of a non-scientific, opinion-based survey developed by OSE.

The purpose of the CRRF is to provide funds to local governments for distribution to community-based initiatives that serve communities most impacted by the disproportionate enforcement of cannabis prohibition. The survey aims to provide insight into how Maryland residents would like to see CRRF funding allocated within their communities.

Public Preferences

Survey results show strong preferences for allocating CRRF funds to:

1.) Mental health and substance abuse services;
2.) Education and after-school programs; and
3.) Housing and homelessness prevention services



Community Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation

Area	Percent	Group
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	17%	Top 3 Preferences
Education and After-school Programs	17%	Top 3 Preferences
Housing and Homelessness Prevention	12%	Top 3 Preferences
Criminal Justice Reforms (e.g., Expungement of Cannabis-related Convictions)	9%	Bottom 3 Preferences
Small Business Grants and Entrepreneurship Support	6%	Bottom 3 Preferences
Parks and Recreational Facilities	5%	Bottom 3 Preferences

Additionally, results indicate that while both elected officials and the general public prioritize mental health and substance abuse services as well as education and after-school programs, elected officials favored job training and workforce development over housing and homelessness prevention services.

[1] Office of Social Equity, Md. Code, Alco. Bev. § 1-309.1

Importance of CRRF Distribution to Disproportionately Impacted Communities

Seventy-four percent (74%) of survey respondents expressed that the reinvestment of cannabis tax revenue into communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs was important to them.

Desire for Public Participation in the CRRF Process

Survey results show that both elected officials and the general public would like for there to be public participation in the CRRF allocation process. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents believe that their local jurisdiction should seek community involvement and/or create a local oversight committee to help determine how CRRF funds are allocated within their communities.

Industry Perception

Forty-six percent (46%) of survey respondents believe that the legal cannabis industry positively impacts their community. Overall, survey results indicate that younger individuals tend to have a more positive view of the impact of legal cannabis within their communities, while older populations tend to be more negative or neutral. The level of uncertainty individuals feel regarding their perception of the cannabis industry also appears to increase with age.

The data also suggests that non-elected individuals have a more favorable view of the cannabis industry's impact compared to elected officials. There is also a higher level of uncertainty amongst elected officials than non-elected officials.

Guidance and Recommendations

The Cannabis Reform Act of 2023 requires each eligible local jurisdiction to adopt a law establishing how funds received from the CRRF may be used. In addition to this mandate, OSE encourages each county and city to establish an advisory committee inclusive of community leaders and individuals that have shared lived experiences of those that were subject to the disproportionate enforcement of cannabis prohibition.

Reporting Requirements

Beginning in 2024, on or before December 1 every 2 years, each local jurisdiction that receives an allocation from the CRRF shall submit a report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the Senate Finance Committee, the House Judiciary Committee, and the House Health and Government Operations Committee and the House Appropriations Committee on how funds received from the Fund were spent during the immediately preceding 2 fiscal years.

CRRF Uses

Funds may not be used for law enforcement agencies or activities, or to supplant funding for pre-existing local government programs.

Funds may be distributed to community-based organizations with or without non-profit designation. As counties begin to craft their grant application process, OSE suggests taking the following into consideration:

Should organizations with an annual organizational budget of over $1,000,000 be considered, they should be encouraged to subcontract with smaller, local-based organizations.

Aligned with the CRRF survey results, counties should prioritize organizations working to uplift communities and that work with topics including but not limited to:

- Mental Health and Harm Reduction
- Education and afterschool programs
- Housing and Unhoused prevention services
- Reentry and Reintegration
- Adult Professional Development
- Entrepreneurship and Economic Development
- Non-profit training and management to support BIPOC community leaders
- Workforce development and training

Funds should be prioritized for organizations with a commitment to inclusive and diverse leadership.

Background

During the 2022 legislative session, state lawmakers passed House Bill (HB) 1, which put the decision of whether to legalize cannabis consumption and possession for individuals aged 21 years and older directly to voters.[2] On November 8, 2022, Maryland voters passed the referendum, which took effect on July 1, 2023.

The Maryland Legislature passed the accompanying *Cannabis Reform Act* (HB 556/SB 516) in the Spring of 2023. The Cannabis Reform Act became law, legalizing the adult-use of cannabis in the State as of July 1, 2023.

Office of Social Equity

OSE, an independent executive agency established by the *Cannabis Reform Act of 2023*, seeks to cultivate an adult-use cannabis market that encourages full participation from communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs through programs, outreach, and advocacy.

The State of Maryland has committed unprecedented resources to promote and encourage equitable

access and participation in the adult-use cannabis market.

OSE will assist the State in directing these resources to focus on equity and economic growth and create an industry that is reflective of Maryland's diversity.

Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund

The CRRF, funded by a percentage of adult-use cannabis tax revenue, provides funding to local jurisdictions to support community-based initiatives that benefit low-income communities and communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the enforcement of cannabis prohibition.

A portion of revenue from the 9% sales and use tax on adult-use cannabis sales is allocated to the Maryland Cannabis Administration to offset administrative costs. Revenue is then allocated as follows: 5% to the Cannabis Public Health Fund; 35% to the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund; 5% of taxes collected in each jurisdiction to that jurisdiction; and 5% to the Cannabis Business Assistance Fund (through fiscal year 2028). The remaining 50% of adult-use tax dollars after these distributions are deposited into the State General Fund. The funds are non-lapsing.

Twenty-year cannabis charge data was used to determine the distribution of funds to counties as part of the CRRF.[3] The Maryland Judiciary and Administrative Office of Courts provided two datasets with cannabis charges covering the periods of July 1, 2002 through December 31, 2009 and January 1, 2010 through January 1, 2023. The datasets were cleaned separately prior to combining them into a final, 20-year dataset for analysis. Data cleaning steps included: removal of out-of-state addresses, addresses identified as correctional facilities, persons listed as homeless, missing zip codes, non-possession and non-cannabis charge records. Data cleaning removed approximately 10% of records from each dataset.[4]

The remaining addresses were verified through the United States Postal Service Application Programming Interface (API) in RStudio. Invalid addresses were corrected using the validated code or removed if too little detail was available to validate. The final combined dataset contained 252,961 records. Counties were imputed by geocoding the validated address data using the ArcGIS Online for Maryland geocoding service and then performing an inner join intersection with the Maryland County Boundaries feature layer created by the Maryland State Data Center.[5]

[2] Acts of 2022, Chapter 45 (HB 1), Accessed 10 Oct 2023 at https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2022RS/chapters_noln/Ch_45_hb0001E.pdf.

[3] Maryland House Bill 1 (2022), Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis Article § 1–322(b)(1) requires that funds be distributed to counties in an amount that, for the period from July 1, 2002, to January 1, 2023, both inclusive, is proportionate to the total number of cannabis possession charges in the county compared to the total number of cannabis possession charges in the State.

[4] The 2002-2009 dataset required more data cleaning since it included many paper records that were digitized through optical character recognition (OCR). Some OCR records were not able to be validated and were dropped from the dataset.

[5] The Maryland County Boundaries Feature Layer created by the Maryland State Data Center is available at https://planning.maryland.gov/MSDC/Pages/census/Census2020/BoundaryFiles-and-Maps.aspx

Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund

CRRF allocations by jurisdiction based on a 20-year proportion of cannabis possession charge data can be found in the table below:

Proportion of cannabis charges by county from July 1, 2002 to January 1, 2023

County	Number of charges	Proportion
Allegany	2,638	1.04%
Anne Arundel	17,701	7.00%
Baltimore City	77,485	30.63%
Baltimore	38,806	15.34%
Calvert	3,984	1.57%

County	Number of charges	Proportion
Caroline	2,121	0.84%
Carroll	5,030	1.99%
Cecil	3,493	1.38%
Charles	7,305	2.89%
Dorchester	2,969	1.17%
Frederick	7,128	2.82%
Garrett	1,065	0.42%
Harford	8,553	3.38%
Howard	6,802	2.69%
Kent	1,267	0.50%
Montgomery	14,515	5.74%
Prince George's	28,900	11.42%
Queen Anne's	2,128	0.84%
Somerset	1,394	0.55%
St. Mary's	3,580	1.42%
Talbot	1,922	0.76%
Washington	5,169	2.04%
Wicomico	5,923	2.34%
Worcester	3,083	1.22%
Total	252,961	100.00%

CRRF Survey Methodology and Limitations

Methodology

As required by statute, OSE opened the CRRF survey on November 1, 2023. The survey closed on November 24, providing participants with slightly over three weeks to respond. At the end of the survey period, 1,285 responses were received.[6]

To recruit survey participation, OSE engaged in an extensive outreach campaign. OSE sought survey participation through efforts including:

- **Elected Official Engagement:** Sharing the survey with the members of the General Assembly and the Local Governments of each jurisdiction, asking them to pass along the survey to their constituents and share via social media.
- **Seeking Trusted Community Voices:** Consulting with trusted, local community leaders for guidance and assistance disseminating information through community and Faith-based networks.
- **Community Association Outreach:** Sharing the survey with over 1,500 local community and neighborhood association leaders.
- **Social Media:** Soliciting engagement via social media and newsletters.
- **Library Engagement:** Seeking the assistance of public libraries across the state, requesting that they share the survey with their networks and hang the survey flyer in public spaces.
- **Community Outreach Organizations:** Engaging with local, community outreach agencies across the state to help spread awareness of the survey.
- **SurveyMonkey:** Utilizing SurveyMonkey to amplify outreach.

OSE worked with the Maryland Cannabis Administration's Office of Public Health, Data, and Education

(MCA-OPHDE) to analyze survey data and develop visualizations for this report.

Survey Limitations

Survey findings can be used to help inform and prioritize the use of funds by local jurisdictions. Several counties had a small number of respondents, and as a result, findings from these regions may not be reliable. In those cases (where fewer than 11 responses were received), results were suppressed and not reported at the county level.

Tests of statistical significance were not performed on the survey data; results are reported as descriptive statistics without confidence intervals.

[6] This number reflects the total number of responses after the data was cleaned and responses suspected to be bots were removed. 56 total responses were removed from the original count.

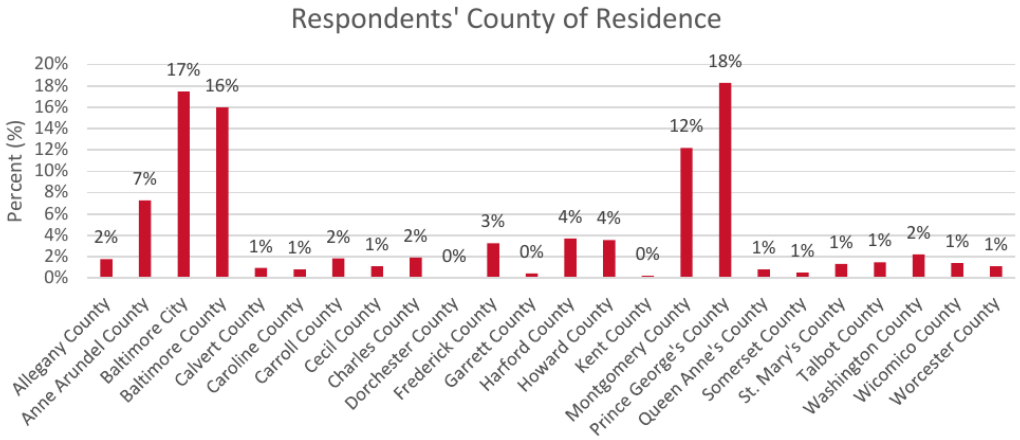
CRRF Fund Survey Analysis

Demographics of Respondents

Question asked: What county do you reside in?

- The largest percentage of survey respondents were from Prince George's County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Montgomery County.
- Counties that received less than 11 responses did not provide information sufficient for analysis (Caroline County, Dorchester County, Garrett County, Kent County and Somerset County) and were suppressed from the data.

Figure 1: Respondents' County of Residence



Respondents' County of Residence (percent)

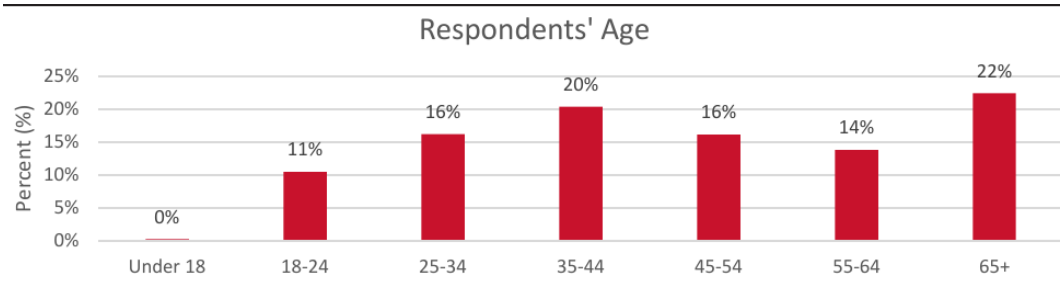
County	Percent
Allegany County	2%
Anne Arundel County	7%
Baltimore City	17%
Baltimore County	16%
Calvert County	1%
Caroline County	1%
Carroll County	2%
Cecil County	1%
Charles County	2%
Dorchester County	0%
Frederick County	3%

County	Percent
Garrett County	0%
Harford County	4%
Howard County	4%
Kent County	0%
Montgomery County	12%
Prince George's County	18%
Queen Anne's County	1%
Somerset County	1%
St. Mary's County	1%
Talbot County	1%
Washington County	2%
Wicomico County	1%
Worcester County	1%

Question asked: To which age group do you belong?

- 51% of all respondents were between the ages of 35-64. 22% of respondents were over the age of 65.
- The fact that a large percentage of respondents were over 65 years of age and appeared interested in this topic is in alignment with national trends that suggest that seniors are one of the fastest-growing populations of cannabis users in the United States. According to the New York Times, studies show that many seniors are turning to cannabis to help them sleep better, dampen pain, or treat anxiety.[7]

Figure 2: Age



Respondents' Age (percent)

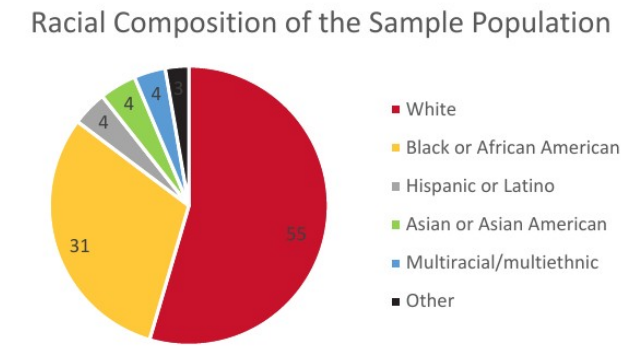
Age group	Percent
Under 18	0%
18-24	11%
25-34	16%
35-44	20%
45-54	16%
55-64	14%
65+	22%

[7] Caron, Christina, 2023, November 16, “Why Some Seniors Are Choosing Pot Over Pills: Older people are using cannabis more than ever. Here’s what to know about its potential medicinal benefits and side effects as we age.” The New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/16/well/mind/medical-marijuana-seniors.html

Question asked: Which of the following best describes you?

- 55% of survey respondents identified as White.
- 31% of respondents identified as Black or African American.
- 4% of respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino.
- 4% identified as Asian or Asian American.
- 4% of respondents were multiracial/multiethnic.

Figure 3: Racial Composition of Survey Respondents



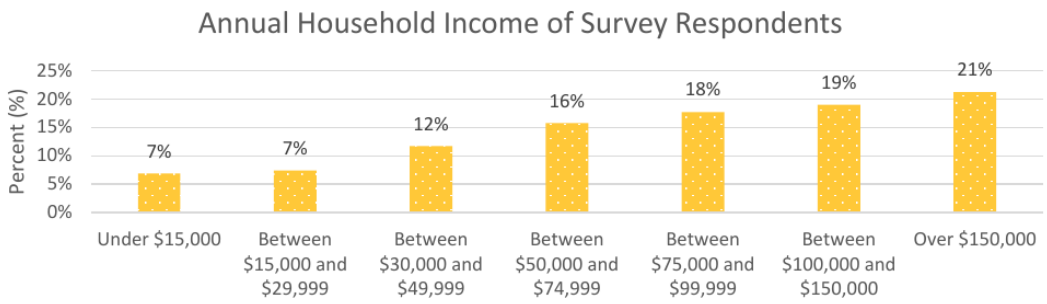
Racial Composition of the Sample Population (percent)

Group	Percent
White	55
Black or African American	31
Hispanic or Latino	4
Asian or Asian American	4
Multiracial/multiethnic	4
Other	3

Question asked: What is your annual household income before taxes?

- 40% of respondents have an annual household income over $100,000. 7% of respondents had annual household incomes below $15,000.
- The data shows a relatively even distribution across the various income levels, with the least number of respondents earning under $30,000 and the most earning over $150,000. This suggests a diverse range of economic backgrounds among the survey respondents, with a significant proportion at the higher end of the income scale.

Figure 4: Annual Household Income Before Taxes



Annual Household Income of Survey Respondents (percent)

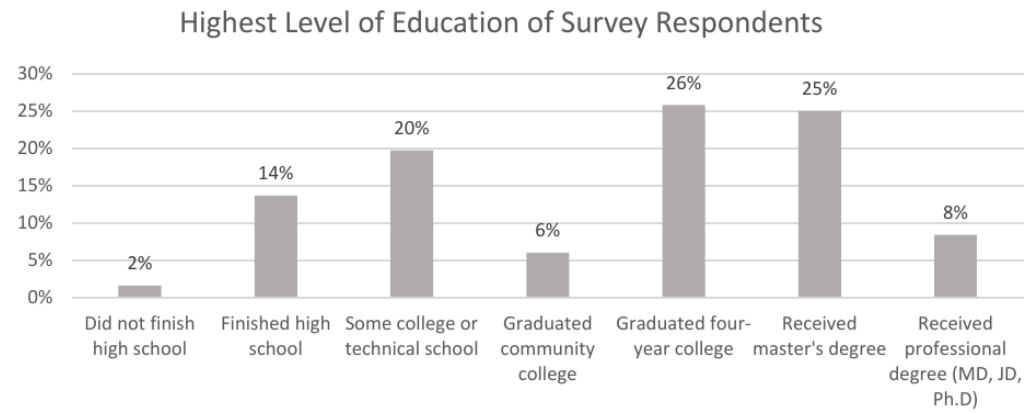
Income	Percent
Under $15,000	7%
Between $15,000 and $29,999	7%

Income	Percent
Between $30,000 and $49,999	12%
Between $50,000 and $74,999	16%
Between $75,000 and $99,999	18%
Between $100,000 and $150,000	19%
Over $150,000	21%

Question asked: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 59% of survey respondents completed a bachelor's degree or higher. 20% of survey respondents attended some college or technical school. 33% of survey respondents received a master's degree or higher.
- Overall, survey respondents show a high level of educational attainment, with over half having at least a bachelor's degree and a significant number holding advanced degrees.

Figure 5: Highest Level of Education of Survey Respondents



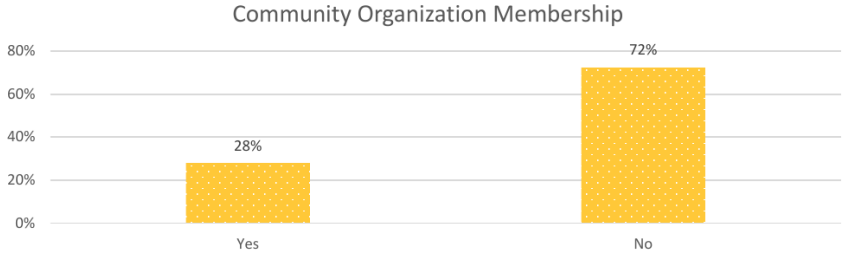
Highest Level of Education of Survey Respondents (percent)

Education level	Percent
Did not finish high school	2%
Finished high school	14%
Some college or technical school	20%
Graduated community college	6%
Graduated four-year college	26%
Received master's degree	25%
Received professional degree (MD, JD, Ph.D)	8%

Question asked: Are you a member of or associated with a community organization?

- The data 28% of survey respondents were members of or associated with community organizations.
- 72% were not associated with or a member of a community association.

Figure 6: Community Organization Membership



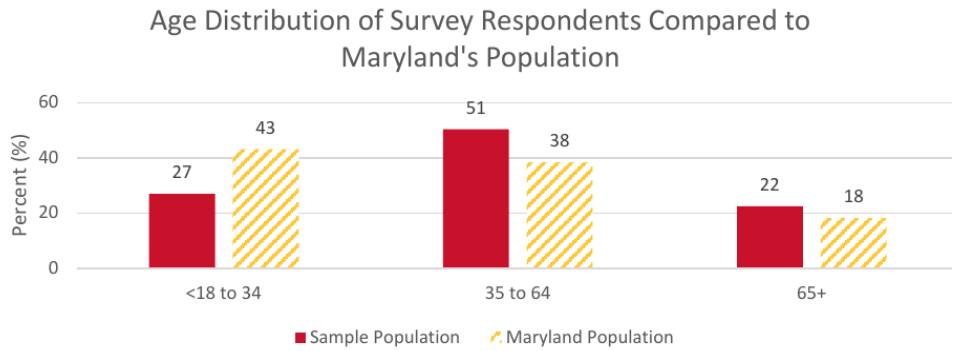
Community Organization Membership (percent)

Response	Percent
Yes	28%
No	72%

Age Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to Maryland's Population

- The survey sample has a lower representation of the <18 to 34 age group and a higher representation of the older age groups (35 to 64 and 65+) when compared to the actual age distribution of Maryland's population.
- This suggests that the survey may be biased towards the perspectives of older populations.

Figure 7: Age Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to Maryland's Population



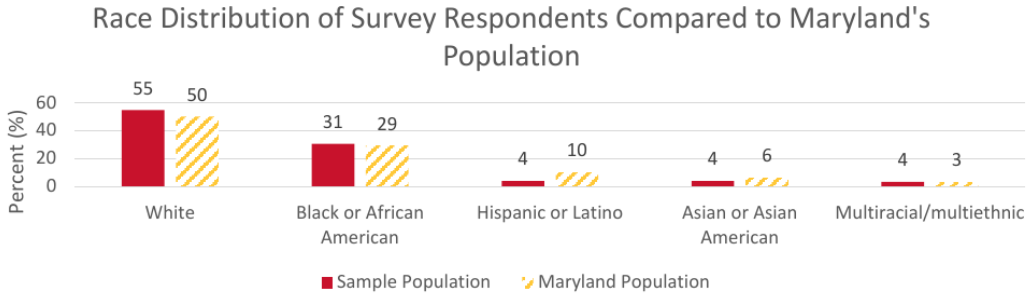
Age Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to Maryland's Population (percent)

Age group	Sample Population	Maryland Population
<18 to 34	27	43
35 to 64	51	38
65+	22	18

Race Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to Maryland's Population

- The survey sample has a slightly higher representation of White, Black or African American, and Multiracial/Multiethnic individuals and a slightly lower representation of Hispanic or Latino and Asian or Asian American groups compared to the actual racial distribution of Maryland's population.

Figure 8: Race Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to Maryland's Population



Race Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to Maryland's Population (percent)

Group	Sample Population	Maryland Population
White	55	50
Black or African American	31	29
Hispanic or Latino	4	10
Asian or Asian American	4	6

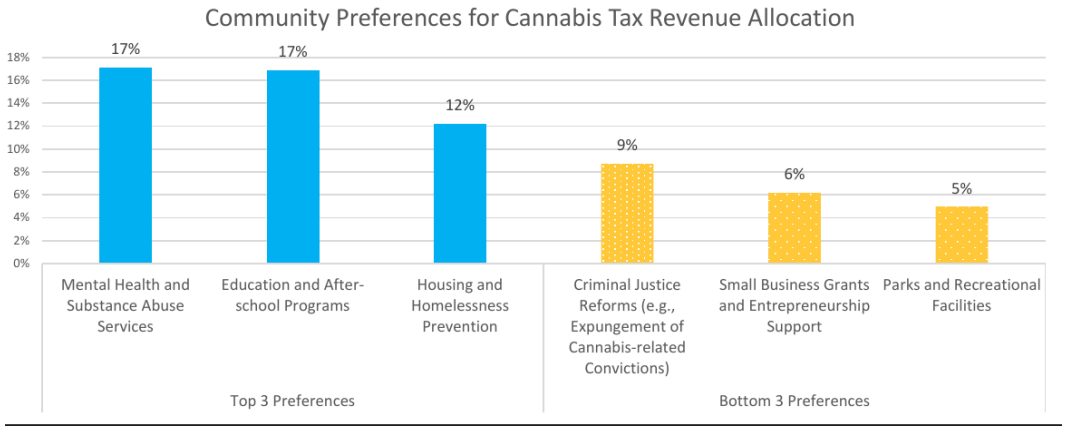
Group	Sample Population	Maryland Population
Multiracial/multiethnic	4	3

CRRF Allocation Preferences

Question asked: A percentage of tax revenue collected from the sale of adult-use cannabis will be allocated to each county (including Baltimore City). Which of the following areas do you feel should receive the most funding? (Please select your top three options).

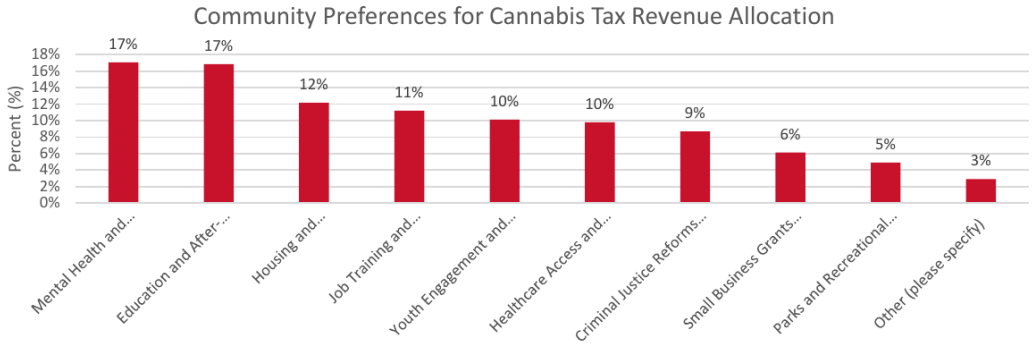
- Respondents were asked to select their top three preferences for how they would like to see CRRF funds allocated within their community. Respondents could choose between 1.) Mental health and substance abuse services 2.) Education and after-school programs, 3.) Housing and homelessness prevention 4.) Job training and workforce development 5.) Youth engagement and mentorship programs 6.) Healthcare access and services 7.) Criminal justice reforms 8.) Small business grants and entrepreneurship support 9.) Parks and recreational facilities 10.) Other.
- Mental health and substance abuse services, education and after-school programs, and housing and homelessness prevention were the top three preferences expressed by survey respondents.

Figure 9: Community Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation



Community Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation

Area	Percent	Group
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	17%	Top 3 Preferences
Education and After-school Programs	17%	Top 3 Preferences
Housing and Homelessness Prevention	12%	Top 3 Preferences
Criminal Justice Reforms (e.g., Expungement of Cannabis-related Convictions)	9%	Bottom 3 Preferences
Small Business Grants and Entrepreneurship Support	6%	Bottom 3 Preferences
Parks and Recreational Facilities	5%	Bottom 3 Preferences



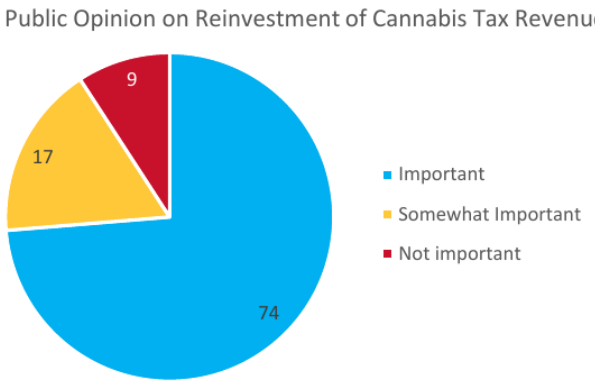
Community Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation, all options (percent)

Area	Percent
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	17%
Education and After-school Programs	17%
Housing and Homelessness Prevention	12%
Job Training and Workforce Development	11%
Youth Engagement and Mentorship Programs	10%
Healthcare Access and Services	10%
Criminal Justice Reforms	9%
Small Business Grants	6%
Parks and Recreational Facilities	5%
Other (please specify)	3%

Question asked: How important do you believe it is to reinvest tax revenue from cannabis sales into communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs?

- The majority of respondents, (74%) expressed that the reinvestment of cannabis tax revenue into communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs was important.
- 17% of respondents stated it was somewhat important, while 9% expressed that it was not

Figure 10: Public Opinion on Reinvestment of Cannabis Tax Revenue



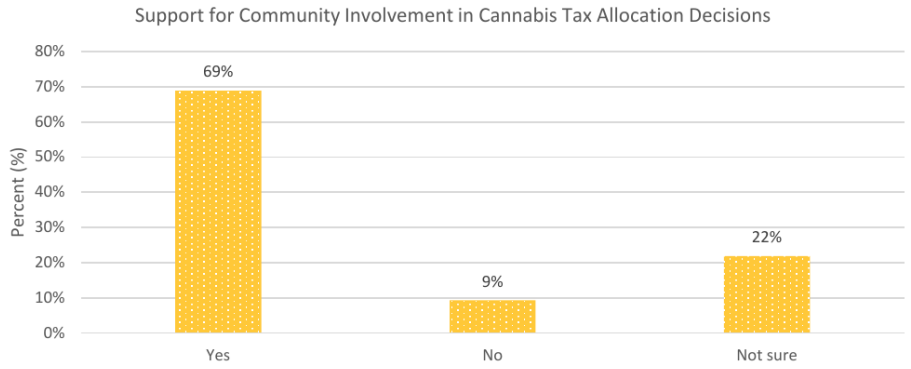
Public Opinion on Reinvestment of Cannabis Tax Revenue (percent)

Response	Percent
Important	74
Somewhat Important	17
Not important	9

Question asked: Do you think your jurisdiction should seek community involvement and/or create a local oversight committee to help decide how tax revenue from cannabis sales are allocated in your community?

- 69% of respondents believed that their local jurisdiction should seek community involvement and/or create a local oversight committee to help determine how CRRF funds are allocated within their communities.

Figure 11: Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions



Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions (percent)

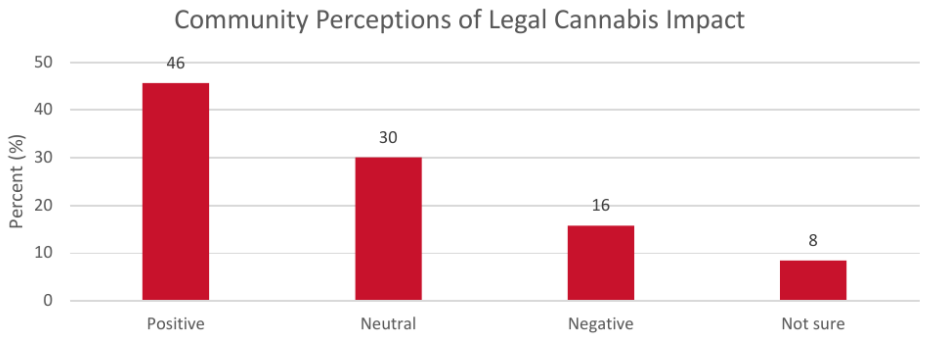
Response	Percent
Yes	69%
No	9%
Not sure	22%

Perception of Legal Cannabis Industry

Question asked: What is your perception of the impact of the legal cannabis industry on your community?

- 46% of respondents believed that the legal cannabis industry had a positive impact on their community.
- 16% of respondents felt that it had a negative impact.

Figure 12: Community Perceptions of Impact of Legal Cannabis Industry on Communities



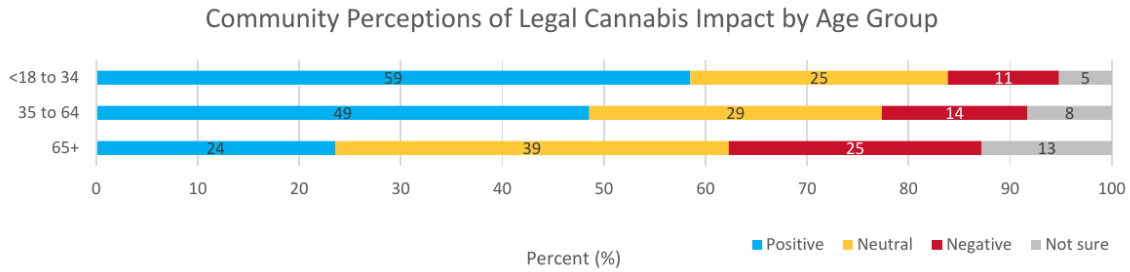
Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Impact (percent)

Perception	Percent
Positive	46
Neutral	30
Negative	16
Not sure	8

Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Impact by Age Group

- The age group under 18 to 34 has the highest percentage of positive perception (59%), followed by a neutral perception (25%), negative perception (11%), and a small percentage that is not sure (5%).
- The age group 65 and over has the lowest positive perception of the impact of legal cannabis at 24%, with the highest neutral perception (39%) and negative perception (25%) across all age groups. The percentage of individuals who are not sure in this age group (13%) is also the highest compared to the other groups.
- Overall, the results suggest that younger people tend to have a more positive view of the impact of legal cannabis within their communities, while the older population tends to feel more negatively or neutral about the topic. There is also a trend where the level of uncertainty increases with age.

Figure 13: Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Impact by Age Group



Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Impact by Age Group (percent)

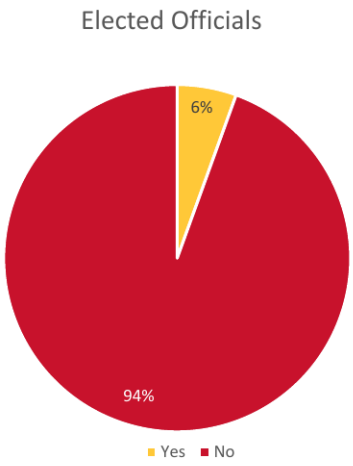
Age group	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Not sure
<18 to 34	59	25	11	5
35 to 64	49	29	14	8
65+	24	39	25	13

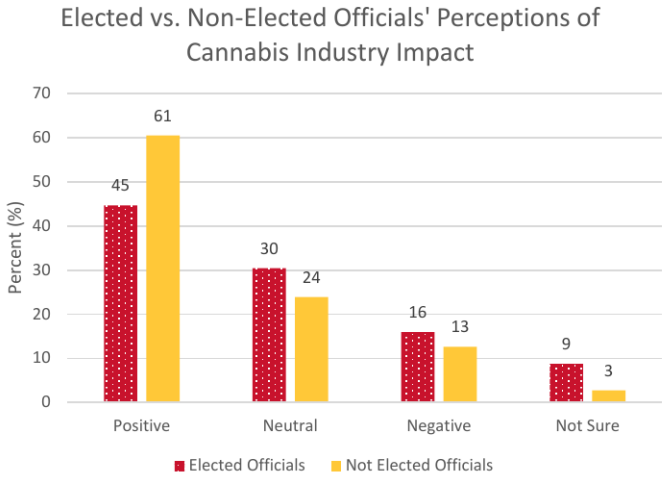
Elected Official Responses

Question asked: What is your perception of the impact of the legal cannabis industry on your community?

- Seventy-one (71) individuals who completed the survey were elected officials (6%).
- Forty-five percent (45%) of elected officials perceive the impact of the cannabis industry as positive. This perception is notably higher among non-elected officials, with 61% viewing the impact as positive.
- Thirty percent (30%) of elected officials have a neutral perception of the cannabis industry's impact. This is contrasted with 24% of non-elected officials who share this neutral view.
- A smaller percentage of elected officials, 16%, perceive the impact as negative. Among non-elected officials, this negative perception is less, with only 13% viewing the impact as negative.
- There is a noteworthy difference in uncertainty between the two groups; 9% of elected officials are not sure about the impact, while only 3% of non-elected officials report this uncertainty.
- The data suggests that non-elected officials have a more favorable view of the cannabis industry's impact compared to elected officials, with a higher percentage reporting positive perceptions and a lower percentage reporting negative perceptions. There is also a higher level of uncertainty or no opinion amongst elected officials than non-elected officials.

Figure 14: Elected vs. Non-Elected Officials' Perceptions of Cannabis Industry Impact





Elected Officials (percent of respondents)

Response	Percent
Yes	6%
No	94%

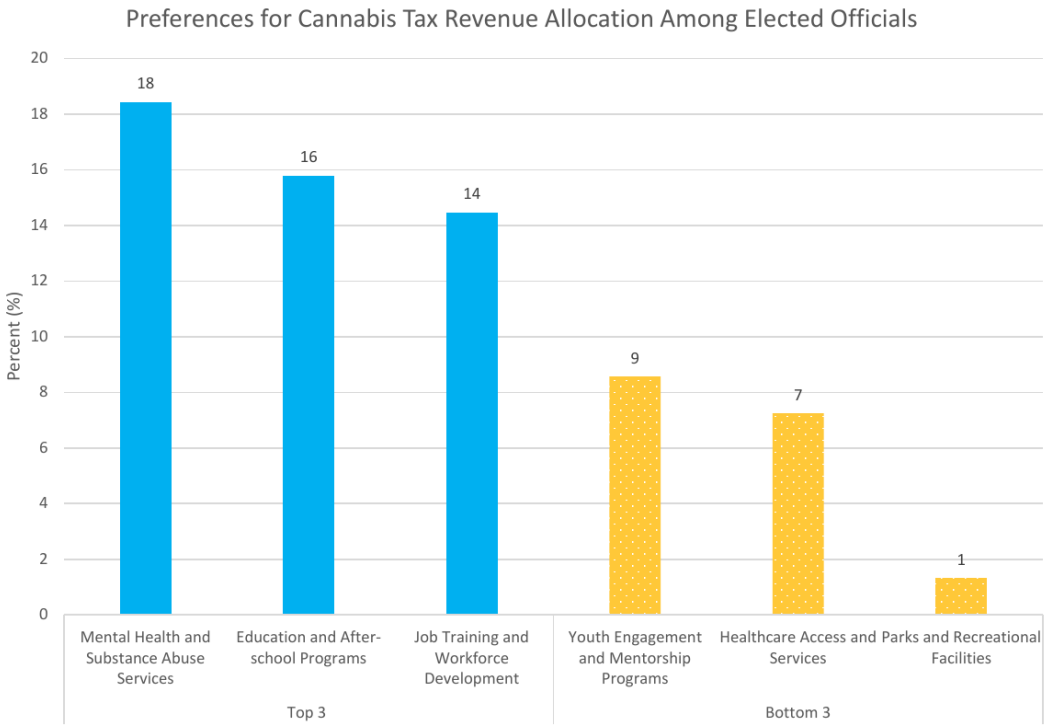
Elected vs. Non-Elected Officials' Perceptions of Cannabis Industry Impact (percent)

Perception	Elected Officials	Not Elected Officials
Positive	45	61
Neutral	30	24
Negative	16	13
Not Sure	9	3

Question asked: A percentage of tax revenue collected from the sale of adult-use cannabis will be allocated to each County (including Baltimore City). Which of the following areas do you feel should receive the most funding? (Please select your top three options).

- Elected officials selected mental health and substance abuse services (18%), education and after-school programs (16%), and job training and workforce development (14%) as their top three preferences.
- The data indicates a consensus between the community and elected officials on investing in mental health, substance abuse, and education programs using cannabis tax revenue. However, elected officials emphasize workforce development, while the community prioritizes housing and homelessness prevention.
- The survey data suggests a discrepancy in the importance placed on criminal justice reforms and small business support, with the community showing more interest in these areas than the elected officials surveyed.

Figure 15: Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation Among Elected Officials



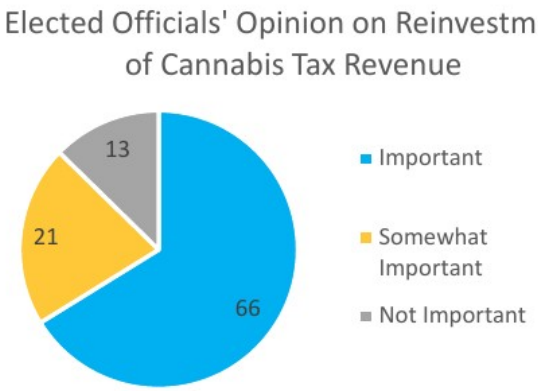
Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation Among Elected Officials (percent)

Area	Percent	Group
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	18	Top 3
Education and After-school Programs	16	Top 3
Job Training and Workforce Development	14	Top 3
Youth Engagement and Mentorship Programs	9	Bottom 3
Healthcare Access and Services	7	Bottom 3
Parks and Recreational Facilities	1	Bottom 3

Question asked: How important do you believe it is to reinvest tax revenue from cannabis sales into communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs?

- A majority (66%) percent of elected officials consider reinvestment of cannabis tax revenue to be important. Only a small fraction (13%) of elected officials surveyed believe it is not important.
- The combined percentage of those who find it either “Important” or “Somewhat Important” (87%) significantly outweighs those who do not see it as important. This suggests that there is a general agreement on the potential benefits of reinvesting a percentage of cannabis tax revenue toward relevant community programs and services.

Figure 16: Elected Officials’ Opinion on Reinvestment of Cannabis Tax Revenue



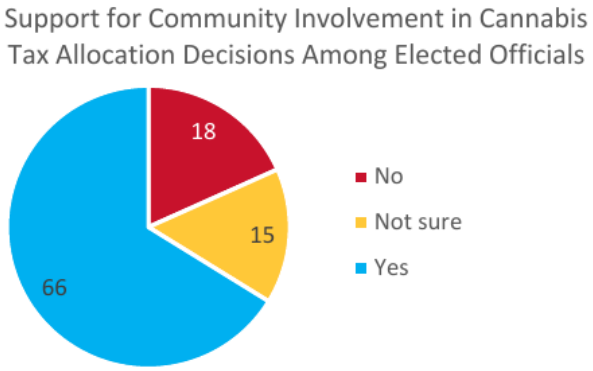
Elected Officials' Opinion on Reinvestment of Cannabis Tax Revenue (percent)

Response	Percent
Important	66
Somewhat Important	21
Not Important	13

Question asked: Do you think your jurisdiction should seek community involvement and/or create a local oversight committee to help decide how tax revenue from cannabis sales are allocated in your community?

- A significant majority, 66%, support community involvement and/or the creation of a local oversight committee to help decide how tax revenue from cannabis sales are allocated within the community.
- Data shows that two-thirds of the elected officials surveyed are in favor of having community involvement in the decision-making process regarding the allocation of cannabis tax revenue. The results indicate a tendency among elected officials to consider community inputs in policy decisions regarding the CRRF.

Figure 17: Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions Among Elected Officials



Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions Among Elected Officials (percent)

Response	Percent
No	18
Not sure	15
Yes	66

County Snapshots

Note: the underlying counts for Figures 18, 19, 20 and 22 are given in Appendix B.

Figure 18: Support for Community Investment in Cannabis Tax Allocation by County

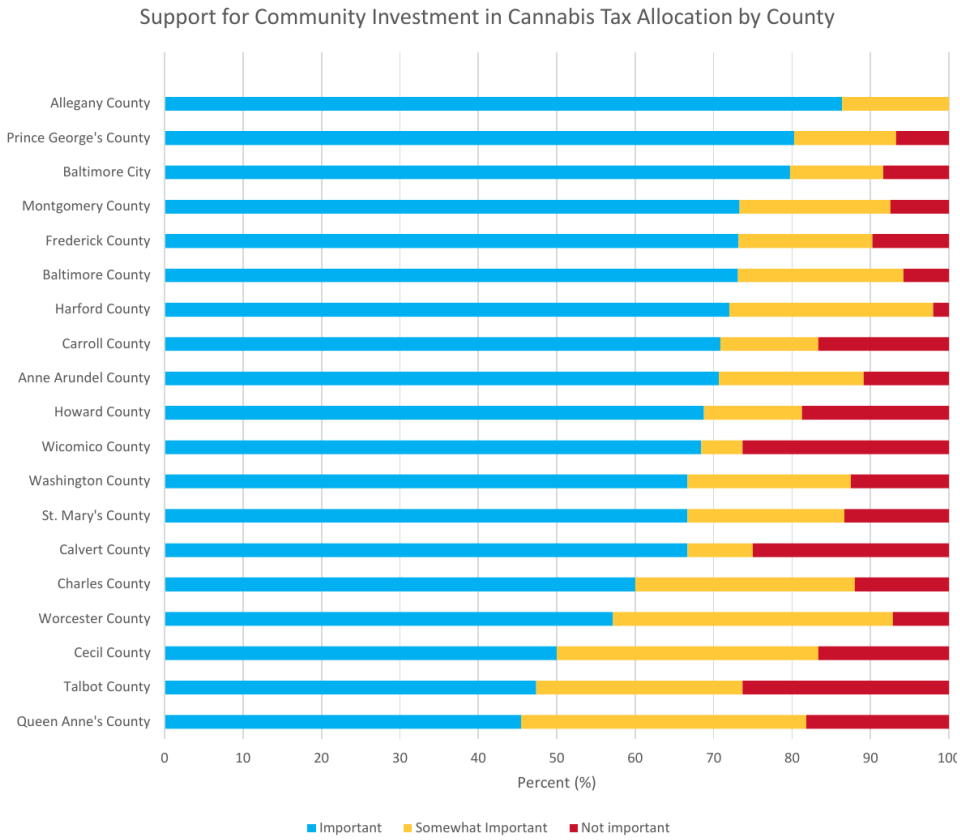


Figure 19: County-Level Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions

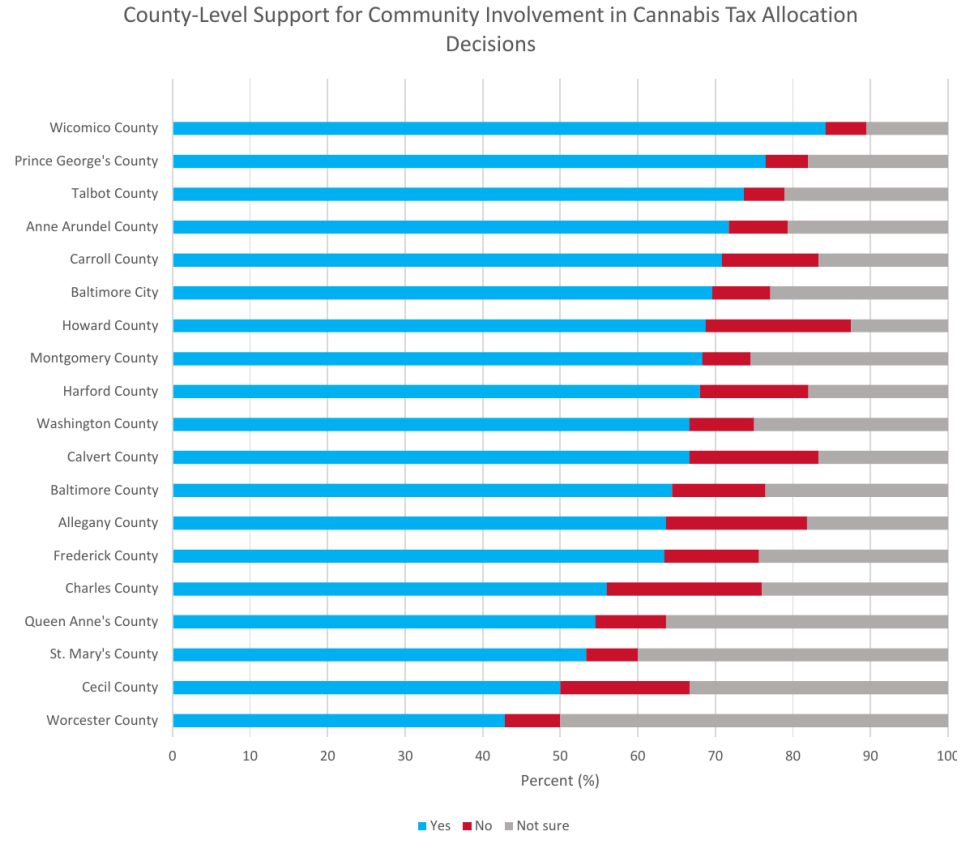


Figure 20: Racial Breakdown of Respondents by County

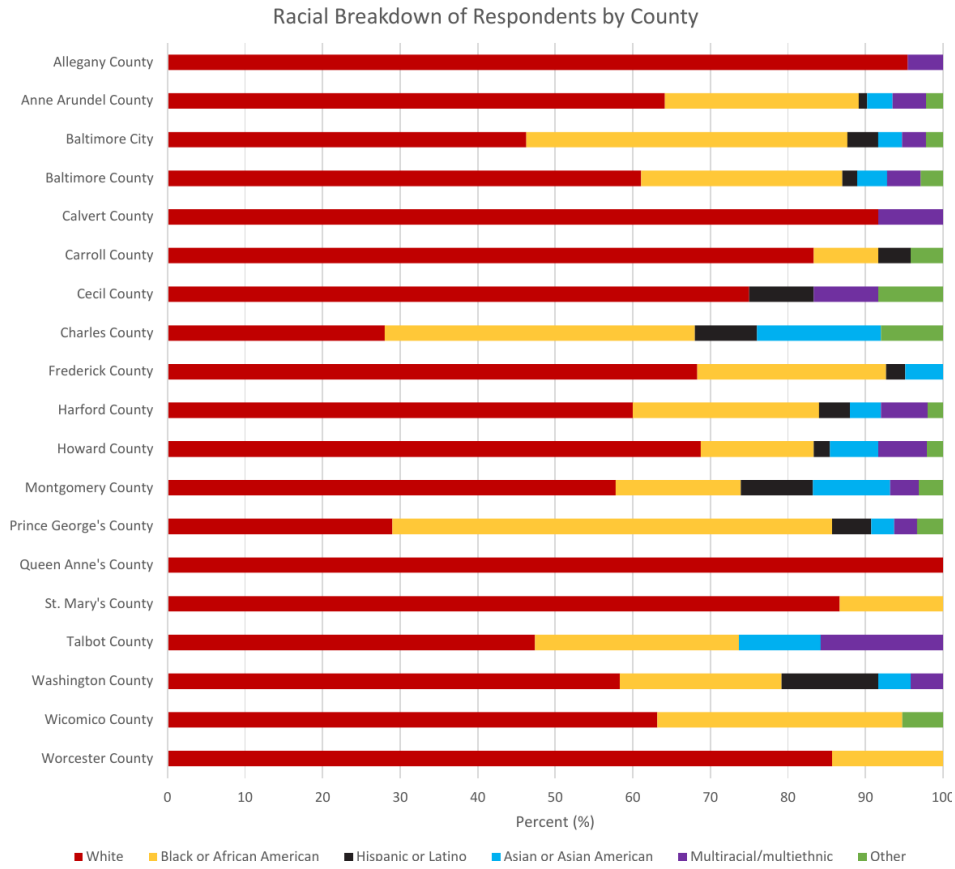


Figure 21: Average household Income of Respondents by County

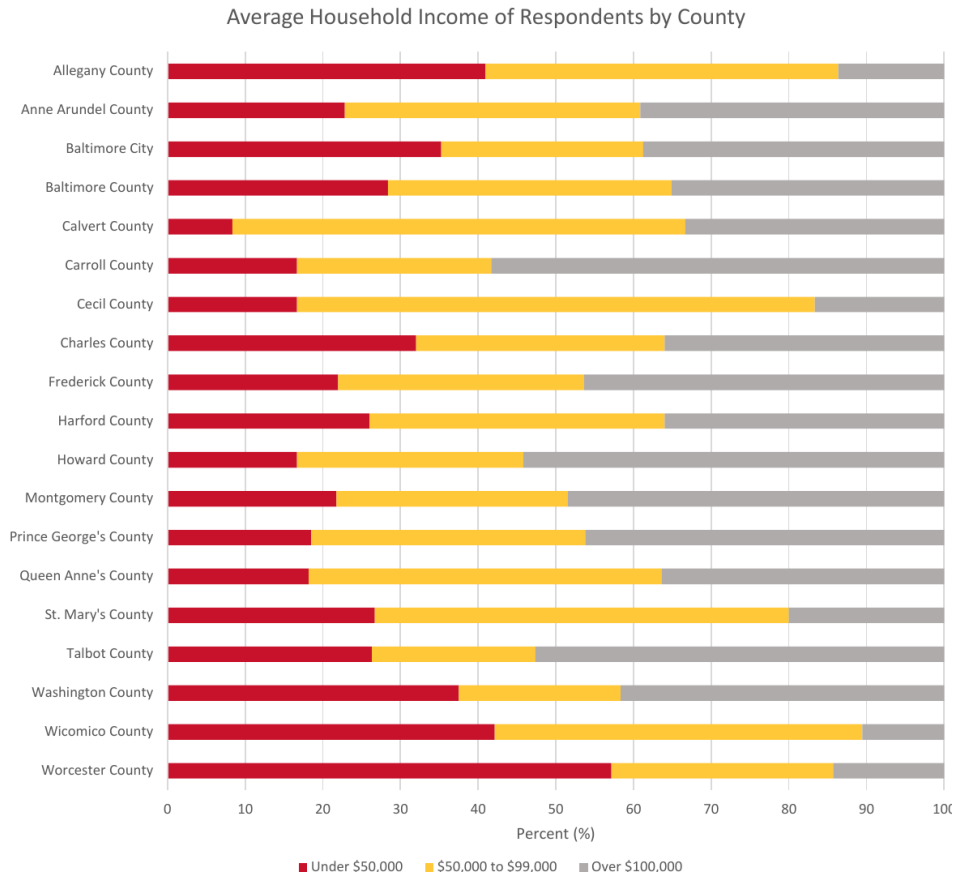
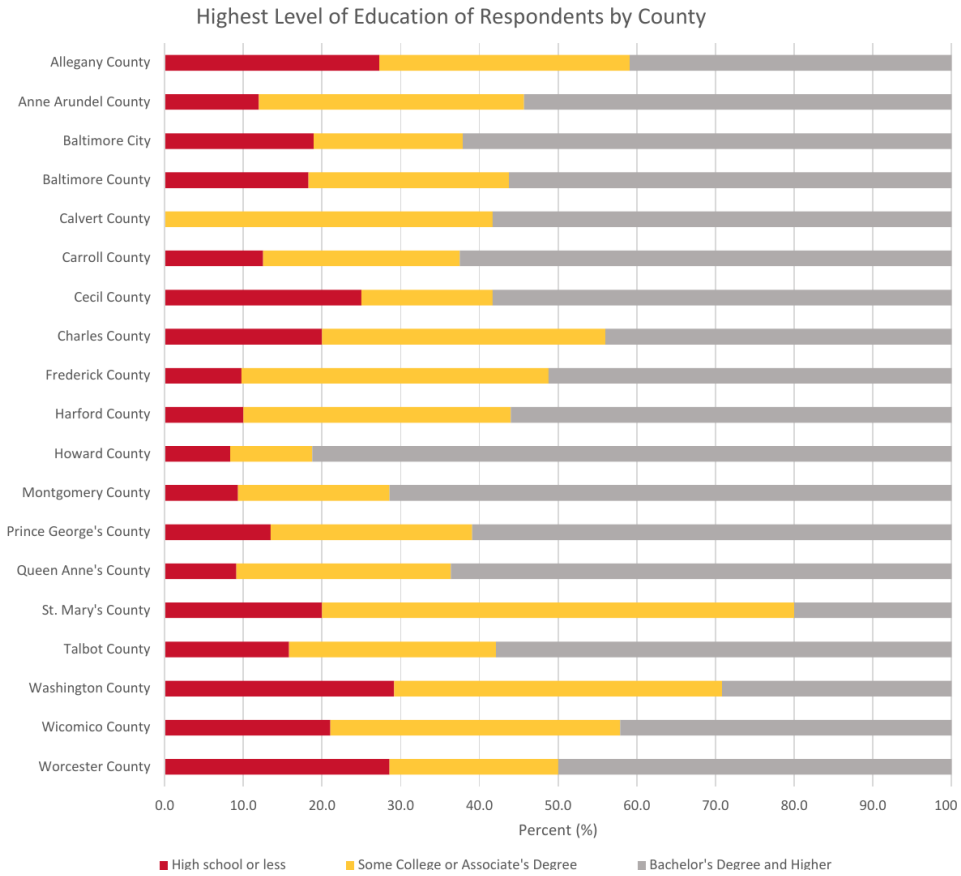


Figure 22: Highest Level of Education of Respondents by County



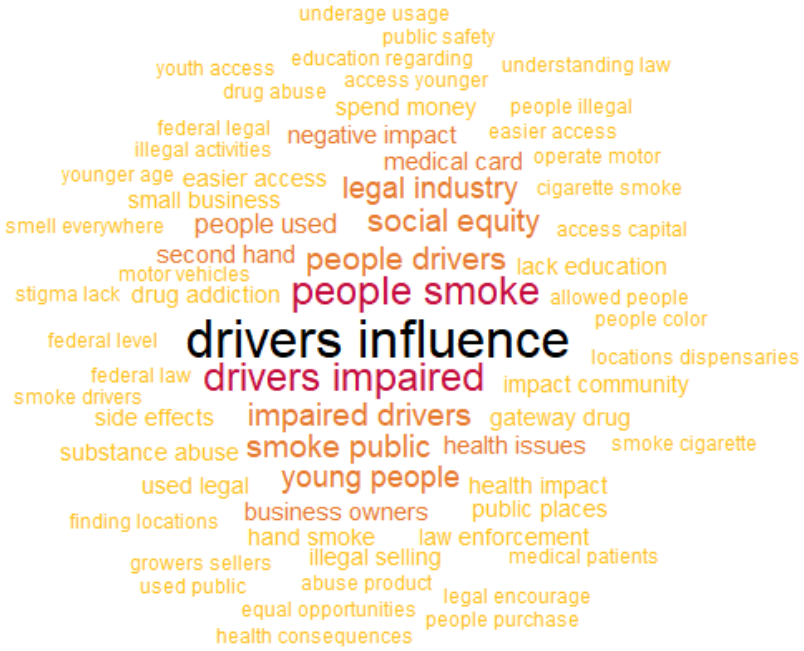
Jurisdictional Challenges

Question asked: What do you feel are the most significant challenges related to the legal cannabis industry in your jurisdiction?

This question received over 1,000 free response answers. The key cannabis-related challenges that communities identified are summarized as follows. A bigram word cloud depicting pairs of words that frequently appear together within the survey results, with the size of each bigram adjusted to reflect its frequency, is also included below:

- **Public Health Concerns:** Survey respondents emphasized the need for public education around cannabis risks and responsible use. Concerns about the potential for abuse, addiction, and underage usage were also cited.
- **Social Equity:** Concerns about social justice and the historical impacts of cannabis criminalization were highlighted. Respondents noted that equitable access is important, especially for minority communities that have been disenfranchised by the inequitable enforcement of cannabis prohibition.
- **Regulatory and Compliance Issues:** Concerns include the complexity and variability of laws and regulations across jurisdictions, which creates confusion and operational difficulties. Respondents also highlighted challenges in obtaining licenses, compliance with zoning laws, and the need for clear guidelines differentiating medical from recreational use.
- **Market and Economic Issues:** Respondents expressed concerns about competition with the black market, where unregulated products often undercut legal prices. Respondents also expressed concerns about the overall economic impact on local communities, including how revenue from cannabis sales are used and its contribution to the local economy.
- **Public Perception and Social Impact:** Respondents shared that despite legalization, negative stereotypes persist, affecting users' personal and professional lives. Additionally, the smell of cannabis and its use in public spaces are mentioned as issues that contribute to divisive community responses. Comments underscored the need for public education to foster a more accepting and informed attitude towards legal cannabis.

Bigram Word Cloud



Suggestions from Respondents

Question asked: Please provide any additional comments, suggestions, or ideas you have regarding how cannabis tax revenue could be utilized within areas disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs.

Respondents provided numerous suggestions and ideas regarding the potential utilization of cannabis tax revenue in areas disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs. Key suggestions are listed below.

- **Abuse/Addiction Services:** Individuals proposed allocating cannabis tax revenue toward creating and supporting treatment centers and recovery programs to help individuals struggling with drug abuse and addiction, providing them with necessary rehabilitation services.
- **Homelessness and Housing Assistance:** Funds could be directed towards housing programs aimed at reducing homelessness and offering housing assistance. This would help stabilize communities impacted by drug-related offenses.
- **Direct Reparations and Support for Illegal to Legal Transition:** Suggestions include providing financial assistance for legal fees related to expungement, job training for individuals affected by incarceration, and educational campaigns about the medicinal benefits of cannabis.
- **Agricultural and Youth Programs:** Proposals suggest investing in farming and youth education programs, focusing on teaching agriculture and the importance of community reinvestment.
- **Public Awareness and Educational Campaigns:** The use of funds for public health educational campaigns to teach the public about safe cannabis use and its implications.
- **Lower Taxes:** Using revenue to reduce real estate taxes in impacted areas, aiming to promote social equity and economic development.
- **Education and Scholarship Programs:** Funding for education initiatives, including scholarships for those impacted by the war on drugs.
- **Community Development Projects:** Investment in infrastructure, parks, and community centers to revitalize affected neighborhoods.
- **Healthcare Services:** Enhancing healthcare access and services, particularly mental health support, in impacted communities.
- **Small Business Support:** Providing grants and loans to local entrepreneurs, especially those from communities adversely affected by past drug policies.

Bigram Word Cloud



Conclusion

The form and structure that CRRF fund allocation will take rests within the jurisdictional purview of each county. The information and insights presented in this report will help serve as a resource for local authorities as they chart the course for CRRF fund distribution within their respective communities.

The CRRF distribution process signifies more than just a distribution of funds, it embodies our collective journey and commitment to shaping a new era for the cannabis industry in our state.

As we stand at the crossroads of change and opportunity, let us embrace the spirit of collaboration and innovation. Together, we have the power to lay a robust and equitable foundation, ensuring that Maryland's cannabis industry is defined by fairness, growth, and community empowerment.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Survey Questions

1. To which age group do you belong?
    a. Under 18
    b. 18-24
    c. 25-34
    d. 35-44
    e. 45-54
    f. 55-64
    g. 65+
2. Which of the following best describes you?
    a. White
    b. Black or African American
    c. Hispanic or Latino
    d. Asian or Asian American
    e. American Indian or Alaska Native
    f. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    g. Multiracial/multiethnic
    h. Other
3. What is your annual household income before taxes?
    a. Under $15,000
    b. Between $15,000 - $29,999

c. Between $30,000 - $49,999
d. Between $50,000 and $74,999
e. Between $75,000 - $99,999
f. Between $100,000 - $150,000
g. Over $150,000

4. What is your zip code?
5. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?
    a. Did not finish high school
    b. Finished high school
    c. Some college or technical school
    d. Graduated community college
    e. Graduated four year college
    f. Received master's degree
    g. Received professional degree
6. What county do you reside in? (drop down list)
7. A percentage of tax revenue collected from the sale of adult-use cannabis will be allocated to each County (including Baltimore City). Which of the following areas do you feel should receive the most funding? (Please select your top three options).
    a. Education and After school programs
    b. Job training and workforce development
    c. Small business grants and entrepreneurial support
    d. Mental health and substance abuse services
    e. Housing and homelessness prevention
    f. Criminal justice reform
    g. Youth engagement and mentorship programs
    h. Healthcare access and services
    i. Parks and recreational facilities
    j. Other
8. How important do you believe it is to reinvest tax revenue from cannabis sales into communities disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs?
    a. Extremely important
    b. Very important
    c. Somewhat important
    d. Not so important
    e. Not at all important
9. Do you think your jurisdiction should seek community involvement and/or create a local oversight committee to help decide how tax revenue from cannabis sales are allocated in your community?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Not Sure
10. What is your perception of the impact of the legal cannabis industry on your community?
    a. Very positive
    b. Positive
    c. Neutral
    d. Negative
    e. Very negative
    f. Not sure
11. Are you an elected official?
    a. Yes
    b. No
12. Are you a member of or associated with a community organization?
    a. Yes
    b. No
13. What do you feel are the most significant challenges related to the legal cannabis industry

in your jurisdiction?

14. Please provide any additional comments, suggestions, or ideas you have regarding how cannabis tax revenue could be utilized within areas disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs.

Appendix B: Additional Survey Details and Results

Demographic Distribution of Survey Sample and Actual Maryland Population

Age

Group	Sample Population N	Sample Population %	Maryland Population N	Maryland Population %
<18 to 34	347	27	2,701,739	43
35 to 64	649	51	2,403,585	38
65+	289	222	1,139,636	18

Race

Group	Sample Population N	Sample Population %	Maryland Population N	Maryland Population %
White	701	55	3,028,494	50
Black or African American	395	31	1,773,702	29
Hispanic or Latino	52	4	619,418	10
Asian or Asian American	55	4	382,027	6
Multiracial/multiethnic	47	4	196,537	3
Other	35	3	37,446	1

Demographic Distribution of Survey Sample

Annual Household Income

Category	N	%
Under $50,000	336	26
$50,000 to $99,999	431	34
Over $100,000	518	40

Highest Level of Education

Category	N	%
High School or Less	195	15
Some College or Associate’s Degree	330	26
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	760	59

County of Residence

County	N	%
Allegany County	22	2
Anne Arundel County	92	7
Baltimore City	227	17
Baltimore County	208	16
Calvert County	12	1
Caroline County	9	1
Carroll County	24	2

County	N	%
Cecil County	12	1
Charles County	25	2
Dorchester County	0	0
Frederick County	41	3
Garrett County	5	0
Harford County	50	4
Howard County	48	4
Kent County	3	0
Montgomery County	161	12
Prince George's County	238	18
Queen Anne's County	11	1
Somerset County	6	1
St. Mary's County	15	1
Talbot County	19	1
Washington County	24	2
Wicomico County	19	1
Worcester County	14	1

Elected Officials

Response	N	%
Yes	71	6
No	1214	94

Community Organization Membership

Response	N	%
Yes	356	28
No	929	72

Community Responses

Community Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation

Area	N	%
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	614	17
Education and After-school Programs	606	17
Housing and Homelessness Prevention	437	12
Job Training and Workforce Development	403	11
Youth Engagement and Mentorship Programs	364	10
Healthcare Access and Services	352	10
Criminal Justice Reforms (e.g., Expungement of Cannabis-related Convictions)	312	9
Small Business Grants and Entrepreneurship Support	221	6
Parks and Recreational Facilities	177	5
Other (please specify)	105	3

Public Opinion on Reinvestment of Cannabis Tax Revenue (rows as printed in the original)

Response	N	%

Important		
Somewhat Important	947	74
Not important	220	17
(no label)	118	9

Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions

Response	N	%
Yes	885	69
No	119	9
Not Sure	281	22

Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Impact

Perception	N	%
Positive	586	46
Neutral	387	30
Negative	203	16
Not sure	109	8

Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Impact by Age Group

Perception	65+	35 to 64	<18 to 34
Positive	68	315	203
Neutral	112	187	88
Negative	72	93	38
Not sure	37	54	18

Respondents' Income Levels by Race

Income	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian or Asian American	Multiracial/ multiethnic	Other
Under $50,000	149	136	17	14	17	3
$50,000 to $99,000	242	116	20	19	19	15
Over $100,000	310	143	15	22	18	10

Respondents' Education Levels by Race

Education	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian or Asian American	Multiracial/ multiethnic	Other
High school or less	93	77	11	7	6	1
Some College or Associate's Degree	159	112	14	12	23	10
Bachelor's Degree and Higher	449	206	27	36	25	760

Racial Breakdown of Respondents by County

Number of respondents (n)

County	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian or Asian American	Multiracial/ multiethnic	Other
Allegany County	21	0	0	0	1	0

County	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian or Asian American	Multiracial/ multiethnic	Other
Anne Arundel County	59	23	1	3	4	2
Baltimore City	105	94	9	7	10	2
Baltimore County	127	54	4	8	9	6
Calvert County	11	0	0	0	1	0
Caroline County	5	2	0	0	2	0
Carroll County	20	2	1	0	0	1
Cecil County	9	0	1	0	1	1
Charles County	7	10	2	4	1	1
Dorchester County	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frederick County	28	10	1	2	0	0
Garrett County	4	0	0	0	0	1
Harford County	30	12	2	2	3	1
Howard County	33	7	1	3	4	0
Kent County	3	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery County	93	26	15	16	6	5
Prince George's County	69	135	12	7	8	7
Queen Anne's County	11	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset County	6	0	0	0	0	0
St. Mary's County	13	2	0	0	0	0
Talbot County	9	5	0	2	3	0
Washington County	14	5	3	1	1	0
Wicomico County	12	6	0	0	0	1
Worcester County	12	2	0	0	0	0

Importance of Cannabis Tax Reinvestment in Disproportionately Impacted Communities by Race

Race	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
White	490	136	75
Black or African American	317	50	28
Hispanic or Latino	43	8	1
Asian or Asian American	37	14	4
Multiracial/multiethnic	44	5	5
Other	16	7	5

Importance of Cannabis Tax Reinvestment in Disproportionately Impacted Communities by Household Income

Income	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Under $50,000	241	63	32
$50,000 to $99,000	317	104	32
Over $100,000	389	105	54

Elected vs. Non-Elected Officials' Perceptions of Cannabis Industry Impact

Perception	Not Elected Officials	Elected Officials
Positive	543	43
Neutral	370	17
Negative	194	9
Not Sure	107	2

Highest Level of Education of Respondents by County

County	High school or less	Some College or Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree and Higher
Allegany County	6	7	9
Anne Arundel County	11	31	50
Baltimore City	43	43	141
Baltimore County	38	53	117
Calvert County	0	5	7
Caroline County	2	3	4
Carroll County	3	6	15
Cecil County	3	2	7
Charles County	5	9	11
Dorchester County	0	0	0
Frederick County	4	16	21
Garrett County	0	1	4
Harford County	5	17	28
Howard County	4	5	39
Kent County	2	0	1
Montgomery County	15	31	115
Prince George's County	32	61	145
Queen Anne's County	1	3	7
Somerset County	0	3	3
St. Mary's County	3	9	3
Talbot County	3	5	11
Washington County	7	10	7
Wicomico County	4	7	8
Worcester County	4	3	7

County Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation

Part 1 of 2

County	Education and After-school Programs	Job Training and Workforce Development	Small Business Grants and Entrepreneurship Support	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	Housing and Homelessness Prevention
Allegany County	13	7	2	12	7
Anne Arundel County	43	23	15	49	32
Baltimore City	114	80	42	96	83
Baltimore County	101	67	28	104	74
Calvert County	4	4	4	6	2
Caroline County	4	3	2	5	2
Carroll County	10	6	4	15	10
Cecil County	5	1	0	9	7
Charles County	16	11	5	9	4
Dorchester County	0	0	0	0	0
Frederick County	18	15	7	15	17
Garrett County	2	3	0	2	1
Harford County	20	11	10	26	17
Howard County	22	13	10	24	13
Kent County	2	0	0	1	0
Montgomery County	73	46	24	75	55
Prince George's County	144	78	54	118	78
Queen Anne's County	7	2	0	5	6
Somerset County	3	1	2	2	2
St. Mary's County	6	5	1	8	6
Talbot County	7	9	1	8	4
Washington County	8	9	2	11	8

County	Education and After-school Programs	Job Training and Workforce Development	Small Business Grants and Entrepreneurship Support	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	Housing and Homelessness Prevention
Wicomico County	10	4	4	6	6
Worcester County	4	5	4	8	3

Part 2 of 2

County	Criminal Justice Reforms (e.g., Expungement of Cannabis-related Convictions)	Youth Engagement and Mentorship Programs	Healthcare Access and Services	Parks and Recreational Facilities
Allegany County	2	5	6	3
Anne Arundel County	22	27	29	10
Baltimore City	58	73	40	41
Baltimore County	39	47	75	30
Calvert County	2	3	5	4
Caroline County	2	5	1	0
Carroll County	2	8	9	6
Cecil County	3	4	5	0
Charles County	4	7	4	2
Dorchester County	0	0	0	0
Frederick County	11	12	13	4
Garrett County	2	2	2	0
Harford County	16	19	16	6
Howard County	11	10	7	3
Kent County	0	0	0	0
Montgomery County	39	26	50	21
Prince George's County	82	88	57	32
Queen Anne's County	4	5	4	2
Somerset County	1	1	1	0
St. Mary's County	1	4	5	2
Talbot County	3	4	3	4
Washington	3	7	13	1

County	Criminal Justice Reforms (e.g., Expungement of Cannabis-related Convictions)	Youth Engagement and Mentorship Programs	Healthcare Access and Services	Parks and Recreational Facilities
County				
Wicomico County	2	6	3	4
Worcester County	3	1	4	2

Community Perceptions of Legal Cannabis Industry by County

County	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Not sure
Allegany County	13	5	3	1
Anne Arundel County	44	25	12	11
Baltimore City	111	73	31	12
Baltimore County	90	64	33	21
Calvert County	6	5	1	0
Caroline County	4	3	0	2
Carroll County	8	9	4	3
Cecil County	4	5	1	2
Charles County	12	8	1	4
Dorchester County	0	0	0	0
Frederick County	15	9	12	5
Garrett County	3	0	2	0
Harford County	26	16	7	1
Howard County	22	9	11	6
Kent County	1	1	1	0
Montgomery County	78	52	23	8
Prince George's County	113	67	38	20
Queen Anne's County	4	4	3	0
Somerset County	3	3	0	0
St. Mary's County	3	6	3	3
Talbot County	4	5	8	2
Washington County	8	8	3	5
Wicomico County	8	3	5	3
Worcester County	6	7	1	0

Support for Community Investment in Cannabis Tax Allocation by Region

County	Important	Somewhat Important	Not important
Allegany County	19	3	0
Anne Arundel County	65	17	10
Baltimore City	181	27	19
Baltimore County	152	44	12
Calvert County	8	1	3

County	Important	Somewhat Important	Not important
Caroline County	6	1	2
Carroll County	17	3	4
Cecil County	6	4	2
Charles County	15	7	3
Dorchester County	0	0	0
Frederick County	30	7	4
Garrett County	3	0	2
Harford County	36	13	1
Howard County	33	6	9
Kent County	2	0	1
Montgomery County	118	31	12
Prince George's County	191	31	16
Queen Anne's County	5	4	2
Somerset County	4	2	0
St. Mary's County	10	3	2
Talbot County	9	5	5
Washington County	16	5	3
Wicomico County	13	1	5
Worcester County	8	5	1

County-Level Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions

County	Yes	No	Not sure
Allegany County	14	4	4
Anne Arundel County	66	7	19
Baltimore City	158	17	52
Baltimore County	134	25	49
Calvert County	8	2	2
Caroline County	7	1	1
Carroll County	17	3	4
Cecil County	6	2	4
Charles County	14	5	6
Dorchester County	0	0	0
Frederick County	26	5	10
Garrett County	5	0	0
Harford County	34	7	9
Howard County	33	9	6
Kent County	1	2	0
Montgomery County	110	10	41
Prince George's County	182	13	43

County	Yes	No	Not sure
Queen Anne's County	6	1	4
Somerset County	4	0	2
St. Mary's County	8	1	6
Talbot County	14	1	4
Washington County	16	2	6
Wicomico County	16	1	2
Worcester County	6	1	7

Elected Officials

Preferences for Cannabis Tax Revenue Allocation Among

Area	N	%
Education and After-school Programs	24	16
Job Training and Workforce Development	22	14
Small Business Grants and Entrepreneurship Support	15	10
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	28	18
Housing and Homelessness Prevention	22	14
Criminal Justice Reforms (e.g., Expungement of Cannabis-related Convictions)	15	10
Youth Engagement and Mentorship Programs	13	9
Healthcare Access and Services	11	7
Parks and Recreational Facilities	2	1

Opinion on Reinvestment of Cannabis Tax Revenue

Response	N	%
Important	47	66
Somewhat Important	15	21
Not Important	9	13

Support for Community Involvement in Cannabis Tax Allocation Decisions

Response	N	%
No	13	18
Not sure	11	15
Yes	47	66

Perception of the impact of the legal cannabis industry on your community

Perception	N	%
Positive	43	61
Neutral	17	24
Negative	9	13
Not sure	2	3

Appendix C: CRRF Statute

(1) There is a Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund.

(2) The purpose of the Fund is to provide funds to community–based organizations that serve communities determined by THE OFFICE OF SOCIAL EQUITY, IN CONSULTATION WITH the Office of

the Attorney General, to have been the most impacted by disproportionate enforcement of the cannabis prohibition before July 1, 2022.

(3) The Comptroller shall administer the Fund.

(4) (i) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to § 12 7–302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

(ii) The State Treasurer shall hold the Fund separately, and the 14 Comptroller shall account for the Fund.

(5) The Fund consists of:

(i) [Revenue distributed to the Fund that is at least 30% of the revenues from adult–use cannabis] SALES AND USE TAX REVENUE DISTRIBUTED TO THE FUND UNDER § 2–1302.2 OF THE TAX – GENERAL ARTICLE;

(ii) [Licensing] CONVERSION fees paid by [dual–licensed cannabis establishments] BUSINESSES UNDER § 36–403 OF THIS ARTICLE; and

(iii) [Any] ANY other money from any other source accepted for the benefit of the Fund, in accordance with any conditions adopted by the Comptroller for the acceptance of donations or gifts to the Fund.

(6) (i) The Fund may be used only for:

1. [Funding] FUNDING community–based initiatives intended to benefit low–income communities;

2. [Funding] FUNDING community–based initiatives that serve [communities disproportionately harmed by the cannabis prohibition and enforcement] DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED AREAS, AS DEFINED IN § 36–101 OF THIS ARTICLE; and

3. [Any] ANY related administrative expenses.

(ii) Money may not be expended from the Fund for law enforcement agencies or activities.

(iii) Money expended from the Fund is supplemental to and may not supplant funding that otherwise would be appropriated for pre existing local government programs.

(7) The State Treasurer shall invest the money of the Fund in the same manner as other State money may be invested.

(8) No part of the Fund may revert or be credited to:

(i) [The] THE General Fund of the State; or

(ii) [Any] ANY other special fund of the State.

(9) The Comptroller shall pay out money from the Fund.

(10) The Fund is subject to audit by the Office of Legislative Audits as provided for in § 2–1220 of the State Government Article.

(b) (1) BASED ON THE PERCENTAGE ALLOCABLE TO EACH COUNTY DETERMINED BY THE OFFICE OF SOCIAL EQUITY AND REPORTED BY THE OFFICE TO THE COMPTROLLER ON OR BEFORE JULY 31 EACH YEAR, THE Comptroller shall distribute funds from the Fund to each county in an amount that, for the period from July 1, 2002, to [June 30, 2022] JANUARY 1, 2023, both inclusive, is proportionate to the total number of [cannabis POSSESSION CHARGES in the county compared to the total number of cannabis POSSESSION CHARGES in the State]

(2) (i) Subject to the limitations under subsection (a)(6) of this section, each county shall adopt a law establishing the purpose for which money received from the Fund may be used.