



The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable Paula C. Hollinger, Chairman  
Members, Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

FROM: Joseph A. Schwartz, III  
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise

DATE: February 24, 2004

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 352 – *Medical Records – Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment*

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The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) which represents over 7,200 Maryland physicians and their patients supports Senate Bill 352.

Senate Bill 352 proposes to develop a “Physician Orders For Life-Sustaining Treatment” form to assist in assuring a person’s treatment preferences related to life-sustaining procedures, facility transfers and other related matters. Currently, there is one standard “Do Not Resuscitate” form that is utilized in emergency transport and by health care facilities. There is, however, no uniformity in physician orders related to life-sustaining treatment. Different facilities have different forms that contain varying information. Some forms are simple and easy to understand and others are complex and confusing. Some persons have living wills and/or advance directives but they are not recognized in emergency transport circumstances or in other instances where there may be facility transfers, etc. The lack of uniformity leads to confusion and delay.

Development of the form proposed by Senate Bill 352 would help alleviate the inconsistent and varying communications regarding patient preferences for life-sustaining treatment and facility transfers. The use of one uniform form, much like the “Do Not Resuscitate” form, would assure that all providers would recognize and understand the provisions of the form. It would assure that necessary information is conveyed in a consistent manner thus facilitating prompt and appropriate treatment. It is a proposal that will enhance the confidence and satisfaction of both physicians and patients. MedChi urges a favorable report.

**For more information call:**

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