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TO: The Honorable Maggie McIntosh, Chairman
Members, House Environmental Matters Committee
The Honorable Dana Stein

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

DATE: February 28, 2012

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 569 – *Motor Vehicles – Motor Scooters, Mopeds, and Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles – Titling, and Required Use of Protective Headgear*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents over 7,300 Maryland physicians and their patients, and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied practitioners in the State, support the requirements for protective headgear use included in House Bill 569 but takes no position on the titling provisions of the legislation.

Maryland has long required the use of protective headgear when operating motorcycles. The cost-saving evidence is uncontroverted and extensively documented. Helmet laws save lives and money. For example, traumatic brain injury is the most common injury associated with motorcycle, motor scooter and moped accidents. Individuals with traumatic brain injuries often receive care in nursing homes, chronic hospitals, and State psychiatric institutions due to a lack of funding for community-based services. These services are extremely expensive and individuals are often underinsured or uninsured and, therefore, the cost of their care is borne by the public through uncompensated care. Individuals enrolled in the Medicaid program for treatment from traumatic brain injury also receive residential and day habilitation and supported employment services which are costly.

Cost savings alone is not the sole justification for the extension of the current helmet law to minors operating motor scooters and mopeds reflected in House Bill 569. Injuries needlessly suffered as a result of a failure to wear proper protective

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headgear produce health consequences which impact not only the future of the injured child but also the child's family and community. It is a personal and societal cost that is unnecessary. MedChi and MDAAP urge the Committee to adopt the provisions of House Bill 569 that require the use of protective headgear.

For more information call:

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