

MedChi

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

TO: The Honorable Maggie McIntosh, Chairman
Members, House Environmental Matters Committee
The Honorable Stephen Lafferty

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

DATE: February 27, 2013

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 775 – *Maryland Pesticide Reporting and Information Act*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents over 7,500 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports House Bill 775.

House Bill 775 requires the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to create a centralized database to collect information on the use of pesticides in Maryland, including which pesticide was used and the location and timing of the application. While pesticide applicators certified by the State of Maryland are currently required to maintain records of their use of pesticides, there is not a centralized database available to state and public health agencies, research institutions and health care professionals.

Pesticide use can have health effects and consequences beyond the purpose for which they are utilized. The creation of the database proposed in House Bill 775 will be valuable in helping to identify and evaluate these unintended health consequences for the benefit of public health broadly. This information would also be useful in the investigation of specific outbreaks and clusters of disease that might be linked to the use of a particular pesticide. Furthermore, as many pesticides could also be used as chemical weapons, the requirement in this bill to report the sale and purchase of pesticides could prove instrumental in preventing acts of terrorism as well.

As there are existing gaps in our knowledge on pesticides, particularly the effects of chronic exposure, the database proposed in House Bill 775 would be a resource of significant potential public health benefit to all Maryland citizens. MedChi urges a favorable report.

For more information call:

Joseph A. Schwartz, III
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
410-244-7000