

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chairman
Members, House Health & Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Ariana B. Kelly

FROM: Joseph A. Schwartz, III
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DATE: March 12, 2014

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 959 – *State Board of Physicians – Qualifications for Licensure and Definitions*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents more than 8,000 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports House Bill 959.

House Bill 959 alters the definition of “board certified” to include a certifying board that is a member of the *Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada* or the *College of Family Physicians of Canada*. This language is already contained in Board regulations but was not included when legislation was passed in 2012 relating to board certification.

Second, the bill clarifies an ambiguity that was identified by the Office of the Attorney General (AG) in 2013 as to the ability of a person who fails a step or level of the medical exam 3 or more times to still become licensed. The language used in House Bill 1313/2013 appears to imply that such a person could become licensed without ultimately passing the exam. As the AG noted in reviewing that bill, “The Board has historically interpreted [the statute] to impose special requirements on an applicant who failed the licensure examination three times but who ultimately passed the examination, *not* to establish a special means for obtaining a license *without* passing the exam.” In short, this legislation makes clear that a person must pass the examination in all circumstances in order to become licensed.

MedChi believes this legislation provides proper clarification on these two issues, and therefore is in support of House Bill 959.

For more information call:

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