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TO: The Honorable Joseph F. Vallario, Jr., Chair
Members, House Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Jay Jalisi

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

DATE: February 20, 2015

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 236 – *Criminal Law – Assault – First Responders*

On behalf of MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (MDACEP), we support House Bill 236.

Enhancing the criminal penalties associated with the assault of first responders to that which is currently provided to law enforcement, appropriately recognizes that the public service first responders provide is as critical to the health and well-being of Maryland residents as law enforcement, and that an assault on one of these individuals should be subject to the appropriate penalties. This is especially justified given the fact that an assault on a first responder may not only lead to their injury, but may also prevent them from assisting those in need, which necessitated their emergency response.

Emergency physicians are especially cognizant of the impact of assault on the provision of emergency services, as assault of employees in the emergency department is not uncommon. These assaults can prevent the provision of necessary health care services and can also put others at risk who are in the emergency department. It is an important addition in the continued effort to appropriately recognize the need for enhanced protection and penalties in response to violence against public servants.

A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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