

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Dereck Davis, Chair
Members, House Economic Matters Committee
The Honorable Dana Stein

FROM: Gene Ransom

DATE: March 12, 2015

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1042 – *Environment – Nitrogen Oxide Emissions – Pollution and Combustion Control Technologies*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents more than 8,000 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports House Bill 1042.

House Bill 1042 provides for the required installation of modern pollution controls on Maryland's coal-fired power plants as required under the Clean Air Act to help Maryland's air quality meet health-based standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency. Maryland's air quality continues to be some of the worst in the Mid-Atlantic. Continued exposure to poor air quality has been demonstrated to lead to an increase in respiratory symptoms, emergency department visits and hospital admissions for respiratory illnesses especially in asthmatics, children and the elderly. In addition, poor air quality presents a serious environmental justice concern due to broad racial and socioeconomic disparities in areas with some of the worst pollution.

Maryland's coal-fired power plants are some of the largest emitters of air pollutants. However, Maryland trails many other Eastern states in the installation of state-of-the-art pollution controls on the plants to control these emissions, thus exacerbating our air quality problem. House Bill 1042 reflects a reasonable plan for the installation of necessary pollution control technology that will bring Maryland's plants into conformity with the Clean Air and EPA requirements. It reflects a deliberative process of consideration that previously was reflected in proposed regulations that were subsequently withdrawn. Passage of House Bill 1042 will ensure that these protections are enacted without further delay thus advancing the State's efforts to improve air quality and reduce the related negative health impacts. MedChi urges a favorable report.

For more information call:
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