

# MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton, Chair  
Members, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Shirley Nathan-Pulliam

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

DATE: February 11, 2015

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 157 – *Consultation, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Mental and Emotional Disorders - Consent by Minors*

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The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents more than 8,000 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports Senate Bill 157.

Senate Bill 157 expands the list of licensed mental health providers to whom a minor may seek care without parental consent. Current law recognizes certain types of health care services for which minors may fail to seek necessary care should they be required to get parental consent. These services tend to involve issues that are either difficult to discuss with a parent or guardian and/or there is parental or guardian involvement in the problem and therefore a minor would rather avoid care than seek consent. Mental and emotional disorders are included in the range of services a minor may access without parental consent. Because ensuring access to care is the basis for the current law, it is logical to extend its provision to additional mental health care providers to ensure there are no access barriers when minors need these services. MedChi urges a favorable report.

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