



**NEWS: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MEDCHI CALLS ON GOVERNOR TO SIGN LEGISLATION TO REFORM HEALTH INSURANCE PRACTICES THAT ENDANGER PATIENTS AND DRIVE UP COSTS**

*Bill Would Cut Paperwork and Delays by Helping Maryland Transition to a Streamlined, Electronic System for Processing Prior Authorization*

BALTIMORE (April 9, 2012) – MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, today applauded the Maryland General Assembly for unanimously passing HB 470/SB 540, legislation to streamline health insurance prior authorization protocols, and called on the Governor to sign the bill without delay:

“The current paper-based system for processing insurance prior authorizations is weighing down our entire health care system. It is complex and time-consuming for doctors and their staffs, distracting from patient care and driving up health care costs across the board. It also jeopardizes patient health by causing dangerous delays for treatments and medications. Reform is long overdue.

“Thanks to new technology, we now have the ability to streamline the process by creating a single electronic method for submitting prior authorization requests. The Maryland Health Care Commission has laid out a plan to move to a standardized, electronic system for filing and processing prior authorization requests, and this legislation will empower the MHCC to hold insurers accountable for their progress.

“On behalf of over 22,000 physicians in the state of Maryland, we thank the General Assembly for working in a bipartisan manner to pass this bill and we urge Governor O’Malley to sign this important legislation into law.”

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It speaks on behalf of over 22,000 licensed physicians in the state. Its mission is to serve as Maryland’s foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients, and the public’s health.