

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair
Members, House Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Jon S. Cardin

FROM: J. Steven Wise
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DATE: March 1, 2023

RE: **OPPOSE** – House Bill 858 – *Health Care Alternative Dispute Resolution Office – Authority of Director – Dispositive Issues of Law*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **opposes** House Bill 858.

House Bill 858 would allow the Director of the Health Care Alternative Dispute Resolution Office (HCADRO) to rule on dispositive issues of law in the event that an arbitration panel chairman has not been appointed or is not available.

MedChi does not believe that this expansion of the Director's role is appropriate. While we understand that current law allows the Director to rule on other matters, we do not think that the Director should be able to rule on dispositive issues. Cases are referred to arbitration panels so that an objective person can weigh the case without concern for other administrative matters, and we are concerned that the line gets blurred when the Director steps into this role.

For these reasons, MedChi urges an unfavorable report.