

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
The Honorable Pamela Beidle

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
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DATE: March 15, 2023

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 916 – *Environment – Ethylene Oxide – Prohibition*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **opposes** Senate Bill 916.

Senate Bill 916 prohibits a person from using, manufacturing, selling, offering for sale, or distributing ethylene oxide (EtO) in the State. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), EtO is a colorless gas that is used by commercial sterilizers to sterilize devices that cannot be sterilized using steam or radiation, such as some medical and dental equipment.

MedChi recognizes that EtO is considered a toxic air pollutant. However, it is currently highly regulated at both the Federal and State level. It is not clear at this time how common the use of EtO is in the State or whether there are viable alternative sterilization options for medical and dental equipment if it is banned. Without a full understanding of the current use of EtO in Maryland, passage of Senate Bill 916 may have unintended consequences related to medical and dental equipment sterilization. For these reasons, MedChi urges an unfavorable report.