

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Edward R. Reilly

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
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Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: February 26, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 600 – *Health Insurance – Reimbursement of Primary Care Providers – Bonus Payments – Applicability*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** Senate Bill 600, which defines the term “primary care provider” to ensure that physicians and other health care providers receive the bonus payment from carriers for providing after hours and weekend and holiday services.

In 2010, the General Assembly passed the “bonus payment” legislation as an incentive for physicians to provide additional access to primary care services outside of normal operating hours. The goal was to reduce emergency department utilization during those times when a physician’s office is typically closed. While some physician offices have implemented extended hours, patients are frequently relying on urgent care centers for their primary care services when their physician’s office is closed or unavailable, at a lower cost to both the State and the insurance industry. Given that both settings, a primary care office or an urgent care setting, have assisted in achieving the goal of reducing emergency department utilization, both should be entitled to the bonus payment in accordance with the parameters set forth in the statute. We urge a favorable vote.

For more information call:

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