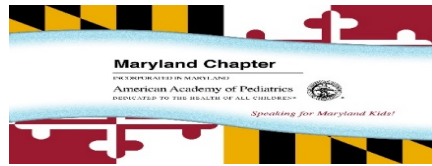




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TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Lisa Belcastro

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: January 26, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – House Bill 209 – *Public Health – Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition, we submit this letter of **support with amendment** for House Bill 209.

The above-named organizations applaud the sponsor for her interest in establishing a Suicide Fatality Review Committee to assist the State in addressing the increasing incidence of suicide through the development of initiatives designed to address the factors identified as contributing to the incidence of suicide. While they support the creation of a Suicide Fatality Review Committee, they would like to voice their concern that the composition of the Committee does not reflect the range of clinical expertise that is necessary to appropriately review medical records and other documentation relevant to the review of identified suicide fatalities. In addition, child fatalities that are attributed to suicide are currently reviewed by the child fatality review program and therefore it should be clarified that this new program does not include child fatalities. Finally, the identification of cases and the process for the identification of relevant medical records and other relevant information may need further revision to ensure that appropriate cases are identified but also that there is appropriate protection of the privacy of records.

The identified issues of concern can be addressed through stakeholder input and the crafting of appropriate amendments which they believe are necessary if the Program is to effectively achieve its objectives. With its noted suggestions for further consideration and amendment, a favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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