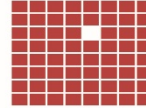




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**Maryland Chapter
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TO: The Honorable, Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Julian Ivey

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

DATE: February 2, 2021

RE: **OPPOSE** – House Bill 29 – *Health – Standards for Involuntary Admissions and Petitions for Emergency Evaluation – Substance Use Disorder*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians **oppose** House Bill 29, which extends the emergency evaluation petition process to an individual who has a substance use disorder. The emergency evaluation process is one that should be taken judiciously. While well-intentioned, we do not believe that this process is appropriate for an individual with a substance use disorder.

Involuntary admissions and the emergency evaluation process is used to enable an individual who is suffering from a mental crisis to receive necessary treatment to stabilize their condition and allow them to seek treatment, which is not necessarily beneficial for an individual with a substance use disorder who may instead turn away from treatment. Rather than extending the emergency evaluation process, we would advocate for strengthening and expanding behavioral health crisis response services. The expansion of services will enable individuals to receive the services when they need it, including making mobile crisis teams more readily available. For the above reasons, we request an unfavorable vote. Thank you.

For more information call:

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