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TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Benjamin F. Kramer

FROM: J. Steven Wise
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Christine K. Krone

DATE: March 10, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 824 – *Health – Accessibility of Electronic Advance Care Planning Documents*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** Senate Bill 824.

Senate Bill 824 requires the adoption of a number of measures designed to increase public awareness of the importance of advance care planning and facilitate access to advance care planning documents, such as advanced directives. The legislation charges the Maryland Health Care Commission with coordinating the implementation of advance care planning programs. The Commission can specify actions to be taken by health care systems and health care providers to encourage individuals to execute advance directives, including through an electronic service recognized by the Commission. Senate Bill 824 also requires carriers to make electronic advance directives available to enrollees during open enrollment and to periodically inquire whether enrollees have executed or updated their advance directive.

MedChi strongly supports efforts to advance the public's appreciation of the importance of advance care planning and, specifically, the execution of an advanced directive. Individuals and their families too often find themselves in unexpected circumstances where they wish they had considered health care decision-making preferences and responsibilities sooner. Instead, they discover that the necessary legal framework that enables health care providers to honor the patient's desires has not been put in place. Passage of Senate Bill 824 will enhance the likelihood that individuals will execute the necessary legal documents required by health care providers and health care systems prior to a need for their use. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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