

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
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DATE: March 22, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1012 – *Workers' Compensation – Fees for Legal Services*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** House Bill 1012. House Bill 1012 states that if no compensation is payable to a covered employee and the covered employee is awarded a medical benefit at a hearing, the Commission shall order the employer or its insurer, a self-insured employer, or the uninsured employers' fund to pay a fee of not more than \$2,000 for legal services rendered on behalf of the covered employee.

While, on its face, House Bill 1012, could be read to only be a benefit to attorneys, we believe that it is a necessary change to assist injured workers. At present, attorneys representing injured workers only receive a legal fee when there is an award on permanency benefits not when there is an award only for medical care. If an injured worker needs future care related to the initial injury, it is often difficult to retain counsel, causing the injured worker to go without care or the cost of care is shifted to other payors. MedChi believes that House Bill 1012 is an appropriate balance to protect injured workers. We urge a favorable vote.