

# 2026 Legislative Priorities



*Looking ahead and advancing our priorities through leadership.*

## Physician Advocacy is Crucial, Not Elective, and Non-Negotiable

The connection between health care and public policy is clearer than ever. In our profession, so much of what we do is shaped by legislation and regulation that directly affects our patients and our ability to practice. It is essential that the physician voice is present and informed whenever health policy is being discussed.

Our physician advocacy is crucial as it:

- Extends the scope of care beyond the clinic walls.
- Prioritizes the wellness of those receiving and providing care.
- Employs unparalleled expertise and the trust of stakeholders by tapping into specific strengths and the reliance placed upon us.
- Works to eliminate systemic unfairness.
- Provides key guidance in the direction of the medical field to create a better health system.

It is an honor and a privilege to contribute to MedChi's advocacy efforts for our patients and our profession, and I urge you to join me in this endeavor in 2026.

**Eric Wargotz, M.D., MedChi President**





# MedChi 2026 Legislative Priorities

The Maryland State Medical Society



Dr. Pallavi Gowda kicks off the 2025 Legislative Session as our first Physician of the Day.



Members from Prince George's County making a difference during their lobby day.



Delegates Lewis, Clippinger, and Edelson join Dr. Erin Maury for a photo in Annapolis.

## MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, will prioritize the following issues in the 2026 Session of the Maryland General Assembly:

- Support reforms to hold health insurers accountable for unfair policies and practices, such as automatic payment reductions (e.g., downcoding) and unnecessary credentialing delays, that disadvantage physician practices and restrict patients' access to timely, high-quality care.
- Safeguard Maryland's investment in Medicaid and access to care for every Marylander by restoring Medicaid Evaluation & Management (E&M) payment rates to 100% of Medicare E&M payment rates.
- Fight legislation that would weaken Maryland's current medical liability environment, including bills that repeal or increase non-economic damages caps, or bills that lower the standard for awarding punitive damages.
- Oppose measures to expand the scope of practice of non-physician healthcare practitioners beyond their education and training, especially when it comes to prescribing medication.
- Protect the interests of physicians and patients in the new Maryland AHEAD Model, including ensuring greater and more equitable primary care participation and increasing access to the Episode Quality Improvement Program for all specialties.
- Ensure that regulatory and disciplinary actions of the Board of Physicians are fair and just.
- Promote public health and safety initiatives that address health equity and social determinants of health.

**MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society**

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