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House Health and Government Operations Committee

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House Bill 1315 – *Health Insurance – Coverage for Child Wellness Services – Immunizations*

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, supports House Bill 1315, which seeks to ensure that Maryland maintains a reliable and evidence-based immunization schedule for children and adolescents, in the absence of the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Given the recent postponement of the February ACIP meeting and concerns over the committee’s stability, this legislation is critical in protecting the health and wellbeing of Maryland’s children.

The ACIP, a committee of independent medical and public health experts, is responsible for making vaccine recommendations to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These experts, appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), analyze clinical trials and research to develop evidence-based immunization schedules. Unfortunately, the postponement of the February meeting has delayed critical discussions on vaccines for bacterial meningitis, human papillomavirus (HPV), cytomegalovirus, and other preventable diseases. Additionally, if ACIP is prevented from convening or if the CDC Director declines to adopt its recommendations, Maryland’s ability to provide timely and evidence-based immunizations to children may be jeopardized.

Therefore, House Bill 1315 proposes an essential safeguard: allowing guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to be followed in the absence of ACIP recommendations. By recognizing the AAP’s recommendations, House Bill 1315 ensures that Maryland’s healthcare providers have clear and authoritative guidance on immunization schedules. MedChi stands ready to support Maryland’s healthcare providers, policymakers, and families in navigating the complex and evolving landscape of pediatric immunizations. For these reasons we urge a favorable report.

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