

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable James N. Mathias, Jr.

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

DATE: March 8, 2017

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 919 – *President Jimmy Carter Cancer Treatment Access Act*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents more than 7,000 Maryland physicians and their patients, **supports** Senate Bill 919, which prohibits a carrier from imposing a step therapy or fail-first protocol on an insured or enrollee for a prescription drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) if: (1) the drug is used to treat the insured's or enrollee's stage four advanced metastatic cancer; and (2) use of the drug is consistent with best practices for the treatment of stage four metastatic cancer and supported by peer-reviewed medical literature.

In 2014, after lengthy debate, Maryland enacted limitations on the use of step therapy or fail-first protocols by carriers and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). Under this current law, a step therapy or fail-first protocol may not be imposed if: (1) the step therapy drug has not been approved by FDA for the medical condition being treated (i.e., off-label use); or (2) the patient was prescribed a drug in the past 180 days and the prescriber submitted supporting medical information to the carrier or PBM stating that it is effective in treating the insured or enrollee (based on the professional judgment of the prescriber).

Metastatic cancer is when the primary cancer has spread beyond its origin to other organs of the body and is the most advanced stage of any cancer. Stage four metastatic cancer has the lowest percentage when it comes to the five-year survival rate. Given the terminal nature of metastatic cancer, MedChi believes that it is inappropriate to apply a step or fail-first protocol. MedChi urges a favorable vote of Senate Bill 919.

For more information call:

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