

February 8, 2019

The Honorable Chair Bobby A. Zirkin
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland. 21401
Sent Via Email bobby.zirkin@senate.state.md.us

The Honorable Chair Shane Pendergrass
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Sent Via Email shane.pendergrass@house.state.md.us

Dear Chairs Zirkin and Pendergrass:

On behalf of MedChi, the State's Medical Society, I am sending you this letter to provide you with additional information regarding the regulation of medical cannabis in the State of Maryland. As you have seen, MedChi has historically not taken an active role in various legislative proposals related to cannabis. It has been our view that many bills introduced have been on fairness and process and not related to health issues.

However, we would like to make you aware of two issues that we believe, if addressed, would improve the public health of Maryland. Both relate to the information available to physicians. As always, we are willing to work with the State or other interested parties to address these issues.

1. Cannabis recipients and dispensaries should be connected and required to share data with the PDMP through the State's Health Information Exchange (CRISP). To accomplish this, funding should be provided to CRISP to assist in the connectivity process. Unfortunately, patients may not always be forthright in disclosing medical cannabis usage. For non-certifying providers, it would be beneficial for them to be able to check the PDMP to ascertain whether their patient may be using medical cannabis prior to dispensing a controlled dangerous substance.

2. Physicians need academic details on cannabis to make appropriate recommendations. MedChi is interested in working with medical growers to create a voluntary academic program where certifying providers could have independent information on the type and strand

available at dispensaries. This would be equivalent to the information currently available from independent sources on other pharmaceuticals and would be beneficial to physicians and ultimately patients.

We believe the above items can be handled under existing laws and regulations; however, if your committees intend to act this year on cannabis legislation, please consider the above recommendations. As always, we stand ready to serve as an independent resource on the use of medical cannabis.

Sincerely,

Gene M. Ransom, III
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission
dhmh.medicalmarijuanacommission@maryland.gov

Robert Neall, Secretary of Health
robert.neall@maryland.gov