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TO: The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chairman
Members, House Health & Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Aruna Miller

FROM: Joseph A. Schwartz, III
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise

DATE: March 20, 2012

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1272 – *Public Health – Electronic Cigarettes – Distribution to Minors Prohibited*

On behalf of MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), we support House Bill 1272

House Bill 1271 prohibits the sale or distribution of “electronic cigarettes” to minors. Electronic cigarettes are devices that deliver nicotine in a manner similar to a cigarette without the use of actual tobacco. They are usually flavored and have become increasingly popular with minors who are not permitted to purchase cigarettes. There is no question that nicotine is addictive and causes significant health concerns. Minors’ access to these devices will ultimately result in an addiction that will undoubtedly cause them to become cigarette smokers and/or users of other tobacco products. Further, because they are not technically tobacco, a minor may falsely believe them to be safe and therefore will be more likely to try and/or regularly use electronic cigarettes thereby increasing the likelihood of addiction. It is essential that Maryland limit access to all products that may jeopardize the health of our youth and specifically that may lead to addiction or increased likelihood of tobacco use. MDAAP and MedChi strongly urge a favorable report on House Bill 1272.

For more information call:

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