

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Brian E. Frosh, Chairman
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable James Robey

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

DATE: February 21, 2012

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – Senate Bill 529 – *Motor Vehicles – Use of Text Messaging Device While Driving*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents over 7,600 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports Senate Bill 529 with amendment.

Senate Bill 529 proposes important clarifications and enhancements to Maryland's current ban on use of wireless communication devices and text messaging as it relates to young drivers. The bill ensures that all wireless communication including text messaging is subject to an administrative penalty for young drivers, including the suspension of a young driver's license; is applicable in the travel portion of the road and applies to all young drivers under the age of 18. Distracted driving is a threat to all persons on our roadways but the inexperience of young drivers makes wireless communication in any form especially dangerous. To that end, MedChi would also suggest that the bill be amended to make all wireless communications a primary offense for young drivers, not just texting. MedChi supports the clarification and enhancement of current law reflected in Senate Bill 529 and, with its amendment noted, urges a favorable report.

For more information call:

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