

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Thomas Mac Middleton, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Kelly Schulz

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

DATE: March 27, 2014

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1282 – *Public Health – Drug Overdose Deaths – Local Fatality Review Teams*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents more than 8,000 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports House Bill 1282 as amended by the House.

House Bill 1282 enables the establishment of Local Fatality Teams for drug overdose deaths, in many ways analogous to the State and local child fatality review teams and the local domestic violence review teams. Deaths from drug overdose are a significant public health problem. The factors that contribute to such deaths are often complicated and challenging to evaluate given the complications that the criminal nature of drug activity adds to efforts to understand and systemically address those factors. Gathering information alone is challenging if not impossible given the fear of prosecution that arises with many of these cases. The success of the child fatality review teams is noteworthy and may be able to be replicated in these circumstances. While MedChi is not well-versed in the nuances of drug overdose death evaluations and cannot comment on many of the specific provisions of the bill, it would like to register its support for this proposal. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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