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TO: The Honorable Peter A. Hammen, Chair
Members, House Health & Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Joseph A. Schwartz, III
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DATE: March 3, 2015

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 658 – *Public Health – Emergency Use Auto-Injectable Epinephrine Program*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), we support House Bill 658.

House Bill 658 establishes an Emergency Use Auto-Injectable Epinephrine Program in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), which authorizes certain individuals (through the issuance of a certificate) to administer epinephrine to an individual experiencing, or believed to be experiencing, anaphylaxis in an emergency situation when medical services are not immediately available. To qualify for a certificate, an individual must be (1) 18 or older; (2) have, or reasonably expect to have, responsibility for at least one other person in their line of work or due to their volunteer status; and (3) successfully complete an educational training program approved by the department.

MedChi and MDAAP support this bill. Food allergies are a common cause of anaphylaxis and represent the most common cause of anaphylaxis among children and adolescents. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, food allergies in children aged 0-17 increased from 3.4% in 1997–1999 to 5.1% in 2009-2011. Other common causes of anaphylaxis include insect stings or bites, latex, and medications. The most rapidly effective treatment for anaphylaxis is epinephrine by injection. Epinephrine is adrenaline and it rapidly reverses anaphylactic symptoms. House Bill 658 sets up a lifesaving, voluntary protocol to allow the quick administration of epinephrine needed when an individual is experiencing anaphylaxis. For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on House Bill 658.

For more information call:

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