

MedChi

The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable, Thomas M. Middleton, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Adelaide C. Eckardt

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

DATE: February 18, 2015

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 195 - *Mental Health - Voluntary and Involuntary Admissions - Assent and Certification by Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), which represents more than 8,000 Maryland physicians and their patients, supports Senate Bill 195

The certification of a petition for involuntary admission requires the highest level of education and training, and should only be granted in narrowly defined circumstances. Expanding the current statute to enable a psychiatric nurse practitioner to sign a certificate for involuntary admission, lowers the threshold for granting such a request to a level that cannot be justified. Current law requires two physicians, or a physician and a psychologist, to concur on involuntary admission. Both professionals are required to have doctoral level education, whereas a psychiatric nurse practitioner is only required to have a master's degree. The lack of education and training could result in a less judicious granting of the request for involuntary admission. MedChi concurs with the testimony provided by the Maryland Psychiatric Society and urges an unfavorable report.

For more information call:

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