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American Academy of Pediatrics
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MID-ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF
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TO: The Honorable Bobby A. Zirkin, Chair
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable Mary Washington

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: March 13, 2019

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 930 – *Unaccompanied Minors in Need of Shelter – Consent to Shelter and Supportive Services*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers (MACHC), we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 930.

Senate Bill 930 provides that an unaccompanied minor in need of shelter has the same capacity as an adult to consent to shelter and supportive services. Data shows that children's health and housing security are closely intertwined, and children without homes are more likely to suffer from chronic disease, hunger, and malnutrition. Moreover, according to data provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Maryland State Department of Education, and Maryland Youth Reach Kids, nearly 20,000 youth in Maryland experience homelessness each year. In addition, a number of studies demonstrate that unaccompanied homeless youth tend to face poor economic and social circumstances as they enter adulthood, including low levels of employment and earnings. Clearly, there is an unmet need for more shelters, other housing programs, and supportive services.

As such, MedChi, MDAAP, and MACHC urge the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to give Senate Bill 930 a favorable report.

For more information call:

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