



Hospice & Palliative Care Network
OF MARYLAND

To: The Honorable Delores Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Ben Kramer

From: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise

DATE: March 11, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 837 – *Health – Advance Care Planning and Advance Directives*

On behalf of the Hospice & Palliative Care Network of Maryland, we **support** Senate Bill 837. The provisions in Senate Bill 837 are the result of a December 2020 Report by the *State Advisory Council on Quality at the End of Life*.¹

Among other provisions, Senate Bill 837 charges the Maryland Health Care Commission to coordinate the implementation of the advance care planning programs in the State and requires each insurance carrier to offer electronic advance directives to its members/enrollees and to make arrangements to receive status notifications when members/enrollees have completed an updated advance directive. As noted in the report, advance care planning improves the care experience by ensuring that patients do not receive unwanted treatments when they are unable to communicate with their care team. It also alleviates the burden often placed on families who may be called upon to make care decisions for patients. Ultimately, the use of advance care planning reduces health care costs by staving off unwanted treatments and ensuring that the patient, at end of life, receives treatment commensurate with his/her medical wishes.

Senate Bill 837 continues the trend in Maryland to ensure that advance care planning is accessible to patients and available to care teams through a coordinated approach. Given the importance of advance care planning, The Network supports Senate Bill 837 and urges a favorable vote.

For more information call:

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¹ https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Health%20Policy%20Documents/SAC/Inc_Elect_Adv_Dir_Reg.pdf