

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair
Members, House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins

FROM: J. Steven Wise
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman
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DATE: February 10, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – House Bill 670 – *Maryland Health Care Commission – Study on Expansion of Interstate Telehealth*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports with amendment** House Bill 670.

House Bill 670 would require the Maryland Health Care Commission, Health Services Cost Review Commission, the Department of Health, the Insurance Administration, malpractice providers, and other stakeholders to study ways to expand interstate telehealth. MedChi supports this goal but maintains that requiring a Maryland license is the only way to maintain patient safety and ensure that the Board of Physicians can discipline and if necessary, revoke the license of any physician who violates the law, especially one outside the State who is seeing patients in Maryland via telehealth.

Greater use of telehealth and licensure by the State are not mutually exclusive goals. The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (“Compact”) has served to license over 700 physicians from other states, allowing them to practice telehealth or in person in Maryland. The Board of Physicians continues to work on other ways to simplify licensure, including reciprocity with neighboring jurisdictions like the District of Columbia and Virginia, as well as licensure by endorsement. Finding ways to advance these efforts is the direction the study should take.

To that end, we would propose that the Board of Physician be directed to advance licensure efforts that will help expand telehealth access. MedChi would ask that the Board of Physicians be carved out of the bill as currently written but covered by the following language: “The Board of Physicians, in consultation with MedChi and other interested stakeholders, shall identify options to further streamline the licensure process, with the goal of ensuring that telehealth be accessible, including reciprocity agreements, endorsement, and encouraging other jurisdictions to adopt the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.”

With these amendments, MedChi supports House Bill 670.

For more information call:

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