



March 11, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building – 3 East
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Oppose – Senate Bill 1016: Health Occupations - Prescriptions for Children Subject to Joint Custody

Dear Chair Beidle and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS/WPS represent over 1000 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS/WPS oppose Senate Bill 1016: Health Occupations - Prescriptions for Children Subject to Joint Custody (SB 1016). While psychotropic drugs can be valuable tools in the treatment of mental health conditions, they should be used and dispensed judiciously. SB 1016 removes clinical decisions and mandates that a clinician prescribe a double dosage of a medication when a child is in a joint custody situation. MPS/WPS understand that it can be complicated to maintain compliance with medications when switching between different households, but SB 1016 is a step too far in trying to remedy that issue. For example, one household might have a different set of medications than the other, and the custody might not be split 50 - 50, so medications would run out at one house before the other. It is important to remember that certain psychotropic drugs, such as stimulants used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), have a potential for misuse and addiction, especially when used improperly or by individuals without a prescription. Having extra prescription drugs accessible only creates an unnecessary temptation for the adolescent patient or those not prescribed the drug to use it outside of the recommended treatment regimen. MPS/WPS believe that a better approach may be to ask the pharmacist to provide an extra pill bottle and divide up the medication that way

Therefore, for all the reasons above, MPS/WPS ask the committee for an unfavorable report on SB 1016. If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society and the Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee