



March 6, 2020

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass
House Health & Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – HB 1486: Public Health - Non-Controlled Dangerous Substance Prescription Record System Program

Dear Chairman Pendergrass and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) is a state medical organization whose physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, MPS works to ensure available, accessible and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strives through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branch of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland excluding the D.C. suburbs, MPS represents over 700 psychiatrists as well as physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPS supports House Bill 1486: Public Health - Non-Controlled Dangerous Substance Prescription Record System Program (HB 1486) for it would benefit practitioners and patients, alike, as many patients do not readily know the names of their medications. By essentially piggybacking on the prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP), the approach under HB 1486 would ultimately reduce costs of care and medication complications.

In fact, the State of Nebraska has operated in a similar framework to HB 1486 over the last couple of years. Nebraska found that the costs of the program were low while the overall benefits of the program were high. MPS concedes that a burden may exist for pharmacists and their systems to enter the data and maintain the data, but this small administrative burden is easily outweighed by the benefit to both the patient and the practitioner.

HB 1486 in practice will ideally be only one look-up of the patient or perhaps the system could allow a practitioner to focus on just controlled dangerous substances and sort by "all" or those that are "currently prescribed". Either way, MPS asks the committee to give HB 1486 a favorable report. If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Legislative Action Committee for the Maryland Psychiatric Society.