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**To:** Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

**From:** Victor Velazquez  
Executive Director, Maryland State Bar Association

**Date:** March 4, 2020

**Subject:** **SB 889 – Adjudicatory Hearings - Attorney Security Passes for Attorneys in Good Standing**

**Position:** **SUPPORT (with Sponsor Amendments)**

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**The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) SUPPORTS Senate Bill 889 – Adjudicatory Hearings - Attorney Security Passes for Attorneys in Good Standing, with amendments offered by the Sponsor and the MSBA to create a Workgroup to Study Security Passes for Attorneys.**

As introduced, Senate Bill 889 would have directed the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to work in conjunction with the MSBA to establish guidelines for the issuance of attorney security passes for attorneys in good standing to enter state court facilities without security screening. (Those attorneys in good standing need not be members of the MSBA, a voluntary membership association). The purpose of establishing the Attorney Security Pass program is to facilitate efficient court operation, by providing expedited access to court facilities by trial attorneys, who are officers of the court.

Under the bill, the MSBA would have managed and administered a program for the issuance of attorney security passes, including by (1) communicating to attorneys the criteria and procedures for obtaining a pass and (2) collecting fees directly related to the management and administration of the program. Additionally, the Department of General Services (DGS), in consultation with MSBA, must adopt regulations providing for the acceptance of attorney security passes at each State facility under the jurisdiction of DGS that houses a unit of State government responsible for conducting administrative hearings.

As originally contemplated, the bill would have provided that such attorneys would not bypass security screening, but would be provided “expedited admittance,” similar to “TSA-Pre-Check” screening in airports, as administered by the U.S.



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Transportation Security Administration. Moreover, we would envision granting discretion to sheriffs and bailiffs at court facilities the discretion to grant or deny access to holders of the security passes, and to confiscate those passes when appropriate. We look forward to our continued discussions on the matter with the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Sheriffs of Maryland.

**For the reasons stated above, the MSBA supports SB 889, with Sponsor amendments, and urges a favorable Committee report.**

For further information, please feel free to contact me at (410) 685-7878 ext. 3020 or [victor@msba.org](mailto:victor@msba.org)

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