

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable Charles E. Sydnor, III

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: February 9, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 454 – *Real Property – Alterations in Actions for Repossession and Establishment of Eviction Diversion Program*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** Senate Bill 454.

Senate Bill 454 establishes a framework for the establishment of an Eviction Diversion Program through the District Court eviction process to reduce the incidence of evictions and promote continuity of housing. A District Court in a County that processed 10,000 or more eviction cases in fiscal year 2019 is required to establish a program. The legislation also requires enhanced notification and communication requirements between landlords and tenants to facilitate the resolution of rental issues with the objective of reducing evictions as well as providing additional assistance for tenants who face eviction proceedings.

There is substantial evidence that housing insecurity and homelessness is a significant contributor to health disparities and exacerbates chronic somatic and behavioral health conditions in already compromised individuals. Creating a framework, as proposed by Senate Bill 454, to divert individuals from eviction and prevent housing insecurity and homelessness will also have a positive impact on the health and well-being of individuals served by these programs and will serve to address the broader goal of the reduction of health disparities. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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