

MedChi

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TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Members, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Malcolm Augustine

FROM: J. Steven Wise
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Christine K. Krone

DATE: January 25, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 2 – *Mental Health Law – Petitions for Emergency Evaluation – Electronic Record*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **supports** Senate Bill 2.

Senate Bill 2 amends the Emergency Evaluation portion of the Mental Health law. Currently, a lay person seeking an emergency petition to have an individual evaluated must appear in court so that a judge can determine whether probable cause exists to evaluate that individual. Alternatively, a licensed health professional can sign the petition. In both circumstances, the result is a petition, which is then presented to a peace officer, who must take the individual to an emergency facility for evaluation.

The current law does not expressly allow for the petition to be in electronic form. Senate Bill 2 would change that. This would allow, for example, a licensed health professional to transmit the petition to the peace officer electronically, rather than physically having to deliver the petition over some distance. In short, the bill brings the law into the 21st century and allows the use of electronic transmission of the petition.

MedChi urges the Committee's support for Senate Bill 2.

For more information call:

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