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House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 5, 2025

House Bill 1066 – *Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access – Membership and Workgroups*
POSITION: SUPPORT

On behalf of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society and the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work, we submit this letter of support for House Bill 1066.

House Bill 1066 strengthens Maryland’s response to behavioral health needs by expanding the membership of the Commission on Behavioral Health Care Treatment and Access and establishing a dedicated workgroup to address health, social, and economic outcomes related to substance use. By incorporating representatives with expertise in harm reduction, housing for individuals with substance use disorders (SUD), healthcare for individuals experiencing homelessness, and drug policy reform, the Commission will be better equipped to address the complex needs of patients. Additionally, the inclusion of individuals with lived experiences, such as those who have sought treatment while incarcerated or participated in drug court programs, ensures that policy recommendations are grounded in real-world challenges and solutions.

Addressing SUD is not just a matter of clinical care but of creating a system that integrates medical treatment, social supports, and harm reduction strategies. Expanding the Commission’s membership ensures that those who understand both the science of addiction and the social determinants of health have a voice in shaping policy. Mental health and SUD are deeply interconnected, and separating their treatment leads to fragmented care. By fully integrating SUD within the broader behavioral health framework, Maryland can reduce barriers to evidence-based treatment, improve continuity of care, and promote better outcomes for individuals with co-occurring disorders.

We urge the Committee to vote favorably on House Bill 1066 to strengthen Maryland’s behavioral health system, improve patient care, and advance a compassionate, evidence-based approach to substance use treatment.

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