



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair and
Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Chief of Staff David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: January 26, 2022

RE: **HB 32 – Mental Health Law – Petitions for Emergency Evaluation –
Electronic Record**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 32**. This bill authorizes a petition for emergency evaluation to be provided as an electronic record.

Maryland's Emergency Petition (EEP) statute allows a person who is an immediate threat to themselves or others, to be taken into custody by law enforcement and transported to an emergency hospital facility for rapid evaluation regarding the need for emergency treatment. Although the EEP statute in Maryland has been a very valuable process to provide individuals who may be suffering with certain mental health disorders immediate treatment, the ability to provide an electronic copy to the emergency hospital facility, would greatly enhance the safety of the Respondent patient.

Currently, the hospital emergency rooms will only accept the original EEP document, which often leads to significant delays in either serving the order or appropriate treatment being provided by medical staff. Often EEPs that may be issued in a District or Circuit Court of a particular County, may lead law enforcement to other jurisdictions in Maryland. If the respondent is located in another jurisdiction, the original EEP document must be personally driven by valuable law enforcement resources to the other jurisdiction, no matter how long the travel time and distance, delaying the required mental health treatment.

Authorizing EEP documentation to be provided electronically expedites this process and would allow necessary emergency treatment to be provided in a more immediate timeframe. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 32** and urge a **FAVORABLE** report.