



February 14, 2013

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh  
Chairwoman  
House Environmental Matters Committee  
House Office Building, Room 251  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable James E. Malone, Jr.  
Vice-Chair  
House Environmental Matters Committee  
House Office Building, Room 251  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Senate Bill (HB) 528—Support

Dear Chairwoman McIntosh and Vice-Chair Malone:

On behalf of Children's National Medical Center (Children's National), I am pleased to support Senate Bill (HB) 528. Children's National applauds Delegate Ben Barnes for his leadership in introducing this bill, which would prohibit drivers and passengers in motor vehicles from smoking when a child under 8 years of age is in the vehicle.

Children's National Medical Center, a 303 bed not-for-profit academic medical center, is located in Washington, DC, but serves the pediatric health care needs of the broader Washington metropolitan region. Located just three miles from the Maryland border, Children's National annually devotes nearly 60% of its inpatient care to children from Maryland. With five outpatient centers in Maryland and specialty care services provided in eight Maryland locations, Children's National is proud to be one of the largest providers of high quality pediatric primary, specialty and emergency care to Maryland's children and families.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics' Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence, which provides education, training, and tools to protect children from the harmful effects of tobacco and secondhand smoke:

“Cigarette smoking and secondhand exposure to tobacco smoke are the leading causes of preventable death in the United States. Many infants and children continue to be exposed to tobacco through all developmental stages: before birth, infancy, early childhood, and adolescence. In newborns and infants, increased mortality has been linked to parental smoking; in infants and children, exposure to secondhand smoke can increase illness from respiratory disease; in adolescents, active tobacco use has been shown to damage health and normal metabolism at a critical stage of growth and development.”

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids estimates that there are currently 108,000 children under the age of 18 in Maryland who will ultimately die prematurely from the effects of smoking, and

smoking is responsible for \$1.96 billion in health care costs annually in the state of Maryland alone.

Children's National Medical Center is committed to policies that improve the health and well-being of the children we serve. In fact, it is part of Children's National's mission to improve health outcomes for children regionally, nationally and internationally. As such, Children's National Medical Center respectfully urges the Committee to give a favorable report to HB 528.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Lee A. Savio Beers, MD  
Medical Director for Municipal and Regional Affairs  
Child Health Advocacy Institute  
Children's National Medical Center