



Maryland
Hospital Association

February 27, 2024

To: The Honorable William C. Smith Jr., Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Re: Letter of Support - Senate Bill 949- Consumer Protection – Self-Administered Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits

Dear Chair Smith:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 949.

With the sponsor's amendments, SB 949 codifies the Maryland Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK) Policy and Funding Committee's recommendations regarding self-administered sexual assault kits. As a member of the SAEK Committee, MHA participated in the work group that developed these recommendations, which ensure safeguards are in place to protect survivors by banning the commercial sale of self-administered kits.

The bill provides flexibility if in the future the state creates a self-administered kit. In the work group, there were discussions pertaining to the infrastructure needed to support survivors if this option were available since they would not have evidence collected by a trained forensic nurse examiner. This would ideally involve a telehealth model of care to support survivors and help protect the integrity of the evidence and ensure chain of custody.

We thank the Attorney General for taking a firm stand to protect patients, especially survivors of sexual assault. We look forward to continuing to serve as a member of the Committee and engaging in further discussions on expanding access to SAFEs.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on SB 949.

For more information, please contact:
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