

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader**

Senate Bill 810

(Senator Waldstreicher)

Finance

Environment and Transportation

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**State Highway Administration - Electronic Signs Along Highways - Suicide Prevention**

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This bill authorizes the State Highway Administration (SHA) to post information on suicide prevention, including a hotline number, on electronic signs along any highway within a five-mile radius of a high suicide risk zone, as identified by SHA. SHA may adopt regulations to implement the bill.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** SHA can implement the bill using existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law/Background:** The phone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is **1-800-273-8255**. The lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The lifeline is comprised of a national network of more than 150 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.

The suicide rate in the State has remained relatively stable in recent years and is below the national goal of 10.2 per 100,000 people, which is set by the Office of Disease Prevention

and Health Promotion. From 2015 through 2017, the most recent data available, there were 9.3 suicides per 100,000 people in the State.

SHA is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound/noise barriers in the State. It also has responsibility for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Department of Health; Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; National Suicide Prevention Lifeline; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 2, 2020  
af/lgc Third Reader - March 12, 2020

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