

MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel
www.msfa.org



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Madam Chair Pendergrass

Madam Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk

SUPPORT OF HB 650 – STATE GOVERNMENT – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – GOVERNOR DECLARATIONS

Good afternoon Madam Chair Pendergrass, Madam Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee.

My name is Johnie Roth, Jr. and I chair the Legislative Committee of the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA), and I am writing in SUPPORT of HB 650.

The MSFA is a statewide organization representing over 25,000 volunteer fire, rescue, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics and 363 member companies.

The Maryland State Firemen's Association is again glad to support the Governor on this bill before you today. We feel that it allows many existing state agencies in Maryland to be able to provide assistance and coordination to the local jurisdictions more effectively in advance of a disaster or major event, which could likely have an impact on the state.

The MSFA further feels that this will resolve reluctance issues at the local level on whether or not to ask for help from the state and resolve the “all or nothing” approach to a declaration of a State of Emergency. We understand that this bill is one of the first in the nation, “Enhanced Coordination Order”, which will carry out many of the provisions of a State Emergency. This bill will enable MEMA to operate their emergency management system before a time at which the Governor will need to declare that full State of Emergency is needed.

The fire and rescue services of Maryland have always worked well together with our partner agencies through communication and dialog in changing needs of our residents, businesses, and visitors. Many incidents that we respond to never raise to the level of a disaster¹, but available tools within the current policy are inadequate to deal with acute incidents or events.

Thank you Madam Chair for your consideration and we respectfully request a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB 650.

**Johnie F. Roth, Jr.
MSFA Chairman
Legislative Committee**