



**Re: SB 454-Public Safety-Mandatory Mental Health Training-
First Responders and Law Enforcement Officers**

State of Maryland

**Maryland
Institute for
Emergency Medical
Services Systems**

653 West Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland
21201-1536

*Larry Hogan
Governor*

*Clay B. Stamp, NRP
Chairman
Emergency Medical
Services Board*

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Executive Director*

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MIEMSS Position: Oppose (Amendment Suggested)

Rationale: SB 454 would require individuals licensed / certified under the Education Article 13-516 – that is, all Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel – and law enforcement officers to complete mental health awareness training approved by the Maryland Police Training Standards Commission. **Specific to EMS personnel, MIEMSS believes the bill to be unnecessary because EMS providers in Maryland already receive initial and continuing education mental health training that has been approved by the State EMS Board.**

- The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) is an independent state agency responsible for the coordination of emergency medical services in Maryland. MIEMSS is governed by the State EMS Board comprised of members appointed by the Governor.
- **By statute, the EMS Board licenses / certifies all Maryland EMS personnel, including Emergency Medical Responders, and approves all initial and continuing education programs for EMS personnel.** See Education Article §13-516 (a) (5) and (a)(7)(iii); Education Article §13-516(b); and COMAR 30.02.02.03C.
- In 2012, MIEMSS adopted the National EMS Education Standards which define the competencies for each level of EMS certification / licensure and integrate the skills and knowledge taught as part of the new standards into each certification level.
- **Based on the National Standards, all EMS students are taught about mental health disorders, characteristics and recognition of mental health disorders, and the skills needed to sensitively accommodate patients with mental health disorders.**
- After completion of initial education leading to certification / licensure, Maryland's EMS providers must then also obtain a specified amount of continuing education credits prior to the periodic expiration of their certification / license.
- **Continuing education for EMS providers in mental health awareness is an ongoing focus in Maryland. Continuing education courses conducted in 2018 and 2019 alone included: Dementia; Addiction; PTSD and Suicide; Suicide prevention; Mental Health Emergencies; Mental Health for First Responders; and Behavioral Emergencies.**
- MIEMSS believes that the initial training provided to EMS students which includes mental health-specific education and training, is approved by the EMS Board and is in compliance with the EMS National Education Standards provides an appropriate educational foundation for EMS personnel. Further, this foundation is augmented with continuing education offerings in Maryland that include courses specific to mental health disorders.

MIEMSS Opposes SB 454 and Requests an Unfavorable Report

(See suggested amendment at page 2)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 454
(First Reading File Bill)

Amendment No. 1

On page 1, in line 19, strike beginning with "FIRST" through "ARTICLE." in line 20.

Amendment No. 2

On page 1, in line 21, strike "(3)".

Amendment No. 3

On page 2, in line 4, strike "FIRST RESPONDER AND".