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**To:** Members of The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

**From:** Doyle Niemann, Chair, Legislative Committee, Criminal Law and Practice Section

**Date:** 3/11/2020

**Subject:** **SB635 – Criminal Law – False Statements – Emergency or Commission of a Crime**

**Position:** **Support**

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The Legislative Committee of the Criminal Law & Practice Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **Supports SB635 – Criminal Law – False Statements – Emergency or Commission of a Crime.**

This bill prohibits a person from making a false claim of an emergency or crime to 911 or an emergency report recipient with reckless disregard for the fact that the complaint may cause harm to another person as a result of the complaint.

The bill is a response to a disturbing trend, sometimes referred to as “swatting,” in which individuals make false reports that precipitate serious police reaction that results in harm to innocent individuals. The bill fills a gap in the current law.

For the reasons stated, we **Support SB635 – Criminal Law – False Statements – Emergency or Commission of a Crime.**

If you have questions about the position of the Criminal Law and Practice Section’s Legislative Committee, please feel free to address them to me at 240-606-1298 or at [doyleniemann@verizon.net](mailto:doyleniemann@verizon.net).

Should you have other questions, please contact The MSBA’s Legislative Office at (410)-269-6464 / (410)-685-7878 ext: 3066 or at [Richard@MSBA.org](mailto:Richard@MSBA.org) and [Parker@MSBA.org](mailto:Parker@MSBA.org).