



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**HB 293**

**DATE: February 2, 2022**

**SPONSOR: Delegate K. Young, et al.**

**ASSIGNED TO: Health and Government Operations**

**CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (sara.morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)**

**POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Police)**

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### **Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services – 9-8-8 Trust Fund**

House Bill 293 would establish a 9-8-8 Trust Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund to support crisis response services in Maryland, including the designation and maintenance of a 9-8-8 crisis/suicide prevention hotline. In approving this bill, Maryland will be following federal guidelines calling for states to have a 9-8-8 line in place by July of 2022. Montgomery County Department of Police supports the bill.

Entering a third year of the pandemic, a growing number of individuals are reporting regular bouts of mental stress or emotional disorders. The creation of a simple three-digit number, like 9-1-1, will be more easily remembered and used by residents experiencing mental health crises. The shorter number, 9-8-8, will increase access to mental health services and suicide prevention- saving lives when every second counts.

Montgomery County Department of Police urges the Committee to adopt a favorable report on HB 293.