



OUR MISSION:

Working to enhance the economic prosperity of greater Silver Spring through robust promotion of our member businesses and unrelenting advocacy on their behalf.

HB 293 – Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services - 9-8-8 Trust Fund

Health and Government Operations Committee

February 2, 2022

FAVORABLE

On behalf of the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, representing 400 member organizations, including very small businesses with fewer than ten employees and several nonprofits, in the greater Silver Spring area of Montgomery County, I write to express our support for HB 293 – Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services - 9-8-8 Trust Fund.

In recent years, Silver Spring has seen an increasing number of individuals experiencing mental health crises, most especially individuals who are also experiencing homelessness. Businesses and residents currently have to determine which of three or four different phone numbers to call in order to help these individuals. Having a single number to call that can connect these individuals with services is something both residents and businesses have been asking for.

This why we support this legislation that would designate and maintain 988 as the universal phone number for both a national suicide prevention AND mental health crisis hotline, in accordance with the Federal National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020.

In addition, we agree that it will be critical to develop and implement a coordination and delivery of a continuum of behavioral health crisis response services – crisis call centers; mobile crisis team services; crisis stabilization centers; and other acute behavioral health care services.

While this is only the beginning of everything that is needed to truly provide those experiencing mental health crises the help they need, it is an important first step.

For these reasons, the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE committee report on HB293**.

Jane Redicker

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