



**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill Number:** House Bill 271

**Title:** 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding

**Hearing Date:** February 7, 2023

**Position:** Favorable

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The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *House Bill 271 – 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding*. This bill requires \$12 million in state funding for fiscal 2025.

During the 2022 session, LCPCM was a strong supporter of SB 241 which established the 9-8-8 Trust Fund, allowing the program to lay the groundwork for its infrastructure in fiscal 2024. When fully implemented, the 9-8-8 system will allow Marylanders to access crisis services by using an easy-to-remember three-digit number. This system will reduce the burden on the 9-1-1 system and will also more quickly connect people to crisis services instead of more generalized emergency services. In order for the 9-8-8 system to be effective, there will need to be an ongoing commitment to supporting crisis services in the state. With this year's legislation, the 9-8-8 system will take another important step forward in developing a robust crisis response system in the state. This trust fund will also help facilitate the state receiving federal funds to support 9-8-8 implementation.

We urge a favorable report on this legislation in order to help modernize our state's emergency petition process. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).