

February 7, 2023

**House Bill 271 -- 988 Trust Fund – Funding
House Health and Government Operations Committee**

Position: Support

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1500 nonprofit organizations and institutions. We urge you to support House Bill 271 to provide much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning, capacity building and implementation for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed.

We urge you to give House Bill 271 a **Favorable Report**.