

MDEM - SB405 - Interference with a PSAP.pdf

Uploaded by: Anna Sierra

Position: FAV

SUPPORT - SB405
Criminal Law - Public Safety - Interference with a Public Safety Answering Point

Maryland Department of Emergency Management
Judicial Proceedings Committee
Hearing Date: 21 FEB 2023

Chairman William C. Smith, Jr.
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 20401

Chairman Smith, Jr.,

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes today **in support of SB0405 - Interference with a Public Safety Answering Point.**

SB405 is a crucial step toward protecting access to critical emergency services for Maryland residents. This bill will criminalize actions taken intentionally to disrupt the operations of Maryland's Public Safety Answering Points (also known as 9-1-1 Centers), the universal access point to emergency services. The Maryland Department of Emergency Management, home to the Maryland 9-1-1 Board, recognizes the importance of this bill and we respectfully request a **favorable report**.

Public Safety Answering Points are critical in the chain of public safety response in Maryland. The current statute specifies penalties for interference with other critical services including State government, public utilities, healthcare facilities and public schools. Public Safety Answering Points should be added to this statute to ensure any individual seeking to disrupt the first node in our life-saving emergency services system are penalized and held accountable.

In summary, the Maryland Department of Emergency Management respectfully requests a **favorable report** on Senate Bill 0083.

SWATTING ADL testimonies in Senate 2023 - SB340 an

Uploaded by: Meredith Weisel

Position: FAV



Maryland General Assembly
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
February 21, 2023
Testimony of Meredith R. Weisel
ADL Washington D.C. Regional Director

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in support of *Senate Bill 340 Criminal Law – False Statements – Emergency or Commission of Crime (Antiswatting Act of 2023)* and *Senate Bill 405 Criminal Law – Public Safety – Interference With a Public Safety Answering Point – Penalties*.

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League)

Since 1913, the mission of ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) has been to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Dedicated to combating antisemitism, prejudice, and bigotry of all kinds, as well as defending democratic ideals and promoting civil rights, ADL has long been recognized as a leading resource on effective responses to violent bigotry, conducting an annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents and drafting model hate crime statutes for state legislatures.

Since its inception over a century ago, ADL has been the leading organization fighting hate. As we have said time and time again, where people go, hate follows—including online. That is why, in the early days of dial-up, ADL anticipated the ways in which hate speech could poison the internet and made certain we were investing our time and resources to communicate to the key players in the industry the need for clear and understandable terms of service on hate speech and encouraged them to enforce these policies aggressively. In 2017, we doubled down on our efforts and launched the Center for Technology and Society (CTS). CTS is a leader in the global fight against online hate and harassment.

In a world riddled with antisemitism, bigotry, and extremism, ADL has worked with the tech industry and elected leaders to promote best practices that can effectively address and counter these threats. Our combination of technical and policy expertise—and decades of lived experience embedded in a community that has been targeted, often lethally, by bigots and extremists—informs our approach to fighting online hate, protecting targets of online harassment, and holding platforms accountable. Strengthening our laws to ensure we are protecting vulnerable groups against actions of online hate and harassment as well as its consequences on the ground should be a major priority for Maryland.

Impact of Hate Online

In addition to the surge of hate crimes in our communities, the growth of online hate and harassment targeting marginalized groups is a trend that deserves action by policymakers.

According to a recent national ADL study, 23 percent of Americans experienced some type of online hate and harassment in 2022. Hate-based harassment, which targets people because of their membership in a marginalized or minoritized identity group, remains high holding steady at 65%. The 2022 study also showed that the rate of severe harassment has not declined significantly. Defined as physical threats, sustained harassment, stalking, sexual harassment, doxing, and/or swatting, severe harassment of some kind was reported by 27% of respondents, the same as in 2021. All Maryland residents have a stake in effective responses to hate online.

Swatting

We must do more to ensure we are protecting vulnerable groups against actions of online hate and harassment as well as its consequences on the ground. Such actions include the emerging threat of swatting. Initiating a false alarm is also known as “swatting” when it involves the malicious act of creating a 911 hoax with the goal of sending emergency responders to another’s dwelling. The objective of swatting is none other than to weaponize emergency response systems to harass and intimidate others. It is costly, hazardous, and causes trauma and serious harm to individuals and to communities. This dangerous conduct has resulted in physical and psychological injuries—including at least one death—to direct targets as well as unintended victims.

Swatting has happened across Maryland, resulting in a grave misuse of government emergency response resources, serious bodily harm to targets, and severe emotional distress to victims. And yet, the law in Maryland has not kept pace. Maryland does not currently have a swatting-specific law on the books. SB340 seeks to address this problem by holding swatting perpetrators responsible, empowering victims, and establishing sentencing guidelines that reflect the severity of these incidents and can deter future incidents.

Further, SB405 would address the significant issue of disruption and impairment of our public safety answering points. Swatting not only causes harm to individuals being targeted or witnesses nearby, but it has a ripple effect on our emergency services that are needed elsewhere at the same time. Emergency responders may not be able to get to someone who is suffering a medical emergency, or car accident, or some other actual emergency when the 911 system is disrupted.

Recommendation

For these reasons, ADL recommends both SB340 and SB405 be enacted to address swatting in Maryland State law. If passed, these laws would prohibit a person from making emergency reports with reckless disregard of causing bodily harm to an individual as a direct result of a hoax swatting call. It would also establish appropriate penalties for a violation of the Act and permit the target of swatting to bring a civil action against the offender. These bills not only give prosecutors the tools to address the serious act of swatting, but also empowers victims of protected communities.

We urge the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to give both SB340 and SB405 favorable reports.

SB405 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Phillips

Position: FAV

MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION

REPRESENTING THE VOLUNTEER FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMS PERSONNEL OF MARYLAND.



Robert P. Phillips

Chair

Legislative Committee

17 State Circle

Annapolis, MD 21401

email: rhcchief48@gmail.com

cell: 443-205-5030

Office: 410-974-2222

Fax: 410-974-3999

SB 405: Workers' Compensation – Occupational Disease Presumptions – First Responders

My name is Robert Phillips and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State FireFighters Association (MSFA)

I wish to present testimony in favor of Senate Bill 405: Criminal Law – Public Safety – Interference With a Public Safety Answering Point – Penalties

The MSFA is in favor of this bill for the following reasons:

- 1) we feel that anyone who decides to interfere with a public safety answering point is further endangering the lives of the public and the emergency first responders who respond to assist the public.
- 2) We feel there should be penalties that if considered would give cause for thought before a person commits a crime.
- 3) we feel that if convicted the penalty is such that the person will not commit this crime again

I thank the committee for their time and attention to this important bill and ask that you vote favorable on Senate Bill 405.

I will now be glad to answer any questions, or my contact information is listed above and welcome any further inquiries you might have.

SB0405-JPR_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 405

Criminal Law – Public Safety – Interference with a Public Safety Answering Point – Penalties

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: February 21, 2023

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 405. This bill would bolster state laws to protect against sophisticated cyber-attacks that pose a significant threat to the security and stability of Maryland's 9-1-1 system.

In 2019, the General Assembly passed Carl Henn's Law, landmark legislation to update state laws and the 9-1-1 financing system to provide the flexibility and resources needed for the deployment of a statewide Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) system that Maryland residents expect and deserve. As Maryland continues the move toward NG911, proper safeguards are necessary to protect against new and evolving cyber threats, including denial-of-service attacks and intrusions by malicious hackers.

SB 405 generally prohibits any actions that intend to interrupt or impair the functioning of a 9-1-1 center. Under the bill, if an individual commits a prohibited act that intends to interrupt the operations of a 9-1-1 center, the person is guilty of a felony and subject to imprisonment for up to five years and/or a fine up to \$25,000. In addition, if an individual perpetrates an illegal act that disrupts the operations of a 9-1-1 center, the violator is guilty of a felony, punishable by imprisonment for up to ten years and/or a \$50,000 maximum fine.

Hackers are increasingly targeting state and local governments – including public safety agencies – with sophisticated cyberattacks that can jeopardize sensitive information and disrupt emergency services. By strengthening state laws to protect against growing and evolving cyber threats, SB 405 would enhance public safety communications in Maryland and in our local communities.

For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 405.

SB405_ TDoS & DDoS Testimony 2023 GEB.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Sen. Cheryl Kagan

Position: FAV

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and
the Environment Committee

Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3134 • 410-841-3134
800-492-7122 Ext. 3134
Fax 301-858-3665 • 410-841-3665
Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB405: Criminal Law - Public Safety - Interference with a Public Safety Answering Point
(also known as “TDoS/DDoS,” defined below)**

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Tuesday, February 21, 2023 1pm

Too often, bad actors have attempted to (and too often successfully) interfere with government systems and networks-- including our 9-1-1 Centers. PSAPs, or Public Safety Answering Points, which receive and process emergency calls, are often targeted. Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks have devastating effects on our emergency network.

If PSAPs are interrupted, people cannot access life-saving services.

A resident and activist from my district, Carl Henn, died when 9-1-1 was overwhelmed when he was in need. His death was the impetus for the NG911 Commission. Endorsing stricter penalties for jamming a 9-1-1 center was a priority for the Commission.

In March of 2018, [Baltimore's 9-1-1 Center was hacked](#). For 17 hours, incoming calls were not able to be relayed electronically to dispatchers and instead had to be manually managed by call center support.

The number of Telephone Denial of Service (TDoS) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks have greatly increased in recent years. During the COVID-19 pandemic, criminals specifically targeted health and safety institutions. In the 3rd quarter of 2021, there was an average of over [1,000 DDoS attacks per day nationally](#). A successful cyberattack on our Health Department in December 2021 (in the midst of a pandemic!) took a [significant toll on the State's health care system](#).

In 2022, Sen. Jeff Waldstreicher sponsored and passed [SB881](#), which ultimately created a statewide Task Force to investigate the issue of Swatting (as well as TDoS/DDoS, covered in this year's [SB405](#)) and make legislative recommendations; the result is this bill. According to the Task Force, current law does not criminalize the interruption or interference of 9-1-1 Centers. Based on the recommendations of both the Task Force and the NG911 Commission, I am sponsoring [SB405](#) with Sen. Waldstreicher to establish significant penalties for these serious crimes. These include:

- Attempted 9-1-1 Center interruption: guilty of a felony, and upon conviction, subject to imprisonment not exceeding five years and/or a fine of up to \$25,000.
- Successful 9-1-1 Center interruption: guilty of a felony, and upon conviction, subject to imprisonment not exceeding ten years and/or a fine of up to \$50,000.

I urge a favorable report on SB405.

SB0405 - Ferretti.pdf

Uploaded by: William Ferretti

Position: FAV

SB0405. Criminal Law - Public Safety - Interference with a Public Safety
Answering Point - Penalties

Tuesday, February 21, 2023, 1:00 PM

My name is William Ferretti. I am a former 9-1-1 Director for Montgomery County. I also had the pleasure to serve on the Commission to Advance NG911 Across Maryland, first as a member of the Commission and then after my retirement from the County, as an advisor.

Cybersecurity was a key focus area for the Commission during its four years of work. Defending Maryland's 9-1-1 centers from the increasing levels of Cybersecurity risks, such as Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, requires a multi-faceted approach. Based on the Commission's recommendations Maryland Laws were updated to ensure that the State's 9-1-1 Centers would have strong Cybersecurity policies as determined and set forth by the Maryland 9-1-1 Board.

Yet there has remained a gap in the state Criminal Code. SB0405 is designed to close that gap by adding strong deterrents via criminal penalties to discourage those that would target a 9-1-1 center with a cyber attack. Left unaddressed, bad actors may continue to target 9-1-1 centers with very little consequences for their actions, and with the potential to significantly harm the residents and visitors of Maryland by causing interruptions to public safety responses to life threatening emergencies.

SB0405 is the answer to closing that gap and I strongly urge you to support this bill with a favorable recommendation.



William Ferretti