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. If 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