

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.