

# MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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



**Robert P. Phillips**

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## **SB 700: Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System – Membership – 9-1-1 Specialists**

My name is Robert Phillips, I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA). The MSFA represents the 25,000 plus volunteer Fire/EMS and Rescue first responders across the state.

I wish to present testimony in favor of Senate Bill 700: Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System – Membership – 9-1-1 Specialists

The MSFA supports this legislation with an amendment. The amendment that we propose is to remove the requirement that the dispatcher is required to be "CERTIFIED BY THE MARYLAND POLICE TRAINING AND STANDARDS COMMISSION AS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER. The majority of 9-1-1 specialists in this state do not hold this certification and are not required to do so.

The MSFA feels that the 9-1-1 specialists are the first link in the chain of first responders. They receive the calls for assistance and start in motion the events that provide help and relief for the public during times of emergency. Without the 9-1-1 specialists the first responders in the field would not be able to do their jobs as efficiently and serve the public as 9-1-1 specialists are our lifeline to the many assets needed in the field.

This addition to the pension plan will be another tool in the toolbox to recruit and retain 9-1-1 specialists for now and the future.

I thank the committee for their time and attention to this important bill and ask that you vote favorable on Senate Bill 700.

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