

**Bill: SB 148 – Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Public Safety Employee Retirement Income (Supporting Our 9–1–1 Specialists Act)**

**To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Testimony of Kenyn Benjamin, President & CEO, Maryland Information Network (MdInfoNet)**

**Position: Favorable**

Chairman Guzzone, Vice-chair Rosapepe, and members of the Committee, my name is Kenyn Benjamin, and I serve as President & CEO of Maryland Information Network (MdInfoNet). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 148.

The Maryland Information Network is dedicated to expanding how Marylanders access help and essential services. Because human service systems are interconnected with emergency response, I am writing to you today.

As the administrators of Maryland’s statewide 211 system, we understand the immense responsibility of responding to urgent and unpredictable calls. For 9–1–1 specialists, each call represents a potential life-threatening emergency, demanding a sustained level of intensity that few other professions face. Their work requires not only technical expertise but also emotional resilience, as they are often the first voice of hope during moments of unimaginable crisis. These specialists are an unseen lifeline, providing critical assessment and absorbing constant crises while remaining precise and calm during moments of acute distress.

SB 148 is a simple yet significant measure grounded in fairness and respect. It poses a clear question: Should 9–1–1 specialists be recognized alongside other public safety professionals for their lifetime of service? It asks whether Maryland will honor the full spectrum of its public safety workforce, not only those who help on the scene, but also the professionals who ensure help can get there in the first place.

The answer should be a resounding “yes,” with gratitude for the vital role these individuals play in Maryland’s public safety system. They are the first step in helping Marylanders in crisis feel secure. They provide reassurance and calm during moments of extreme uncertainty, with no way of knowing what the next call or moment will bring.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for SB 148.

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KB', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Kenyn Benjamin,  
President & CEO