

KRIS FAIR
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

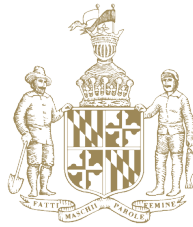
Government, Labor, and
Elections Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Election Law

Local Government/Bi-County
Agencies and Administration

Chair, Maryland Legislative
LGBTQ+ Caucus



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

The Honorable Heather Bagnall, Chair
Health Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 240
Annapolis, MD 21401

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HB 1012: Public Health – Local Suicide Fatality Review Teams – Authorization

Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Committee,

HB 1012 takes a measured but meaningful step: it authorizes local public health authorities to establish suicide fatality review teams, using existing local resources and the professionals who best understand their own communities. Today, one of the most significant gaps in our suicide-prevention efforts is the absence of a legally protected forum where relevant agencies can share information candidly, without risk of compelled third-party disclosure. HB 1012 closes this gap.

Maryland has already demonstrated the value of this model. Local Overdose Fatality Review Teams created by bipartisan legislation led by former Delegate Kelly Schulz, along with Child Fatality Review and Infant Mortality Review Teams, have shown how protected, multidisciplinary local review can identify contextual factors, system intercept points, and upstream opportunities for prevention. HB 1012 builds on these proven structures by extending the approach to suicide, a pressing and growing public health challenge.

While a state-level suicide fatality review program exists, it does not review every death by suicide, nor does it provide the detailed, local analysis needed to shape responsive policies and interventions. Since the program's creation in 2022, only one report on policy change has been issued. Local jurisdictions need the ability to review their own cases and generate insights more immediately relevant to local needs.

We are working closely with our local health department, other public health partners, and the Maryland Department of Health, and we have submitted amendments collaboratively to ensure this bill is implemented effectively and with the utmost sensitivity for victims privacy.

Authorizing local suicide fatality review teams will strengthen Maryland's suicide-prevention infrastructure, align local and state efforts, and empower communities with the information they need to save lives.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1012.

Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kris Fair". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Delegate Kris Fair
District 3, Frederick County