

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2024 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 460 (Delegate Martinez, *et al.*)  
Environment and Transportation

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**State Highway Administration - Dynamic Message Sign System - Maryland's Helpline**

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This bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA) to provide the telephone number for Maryland's Helpline to the public through the dynamic message sign system located throughout the State.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Federal guidance may prohibit SHA from displaying the Maryland Helpline telephone number through its dynamic message sign system, as discussed below in the Additional Comments section; however, if SHA is able to implement the bill, it can do so using existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Through [Maryland's Helpline](#), contacting 988 through call or text directly connects a person to the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

Chapter 585 of 2020 authorized SHA to post information on suicide prevention, including a hotline number, on electronic signs along any highway within a five-mile radius of a high suicide risk zone.

SHA is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound/noise barriers in the State. It also has responsibility for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns.

**Additional Comments:** SHA advises that the current [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways](#), which is the guidance document published and updated by the Federal Highway Administration as the national standard for traffic control devices used on all public roads, bikeways, or private roads open to public travel, generally prohibits the posting of nontraffic related messages on dynamic message signs.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Department of Health; Federal Highway Administration; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 9, 2024  
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