

Environment and Transportation Committee

Chair Delegate Kumar P. Barve

Vice Chair Delegate Dana Stein

Address

Room 251

House Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Good afternoon. Stephen Wantz President Carroll County Board of Commissioners Retired career firefighter and Past president of Carroll County's Volunteer Emergency Services Association.

Fire Sprinklers save lives. When a fire starts its high temperature causes the sprinkler to quickly control deadly heat smoke and flames while the fire is still small. That action prevents injuries and saves lives. I say that obvious info not just for our citizens but also our firefighters. I'm coming at this from another direction.

All across our State volunteer firefighters answer the call each and every minute of the day. All of us in your rural counties as well as the larger counties struggle with recruiting and retaining individuals who are willing to run into burning buildings while all others are running out. It is becoming a huge fiscal challenge as all continue to explore the cost of hiring to combat lack of volunteerism. That's a huge price tag. Reducing injuries by at least 80% reducing property damage by at least 90% and substantially reducing damage to the environment are all factors in protecting your volunteer firefighters.

Not only are we protecting our citizens but we are utilizing a critical tool in the tool box to make the job of volunteer firefighter increasingly viable. Engineers and plumbers etc., use equations to ensure proper activation for sprinklers. Let me share a sprinkler equation for you: Less possibility of injury and death + less time on scene equals a common sense solution for public safety.

HB 823 puts the teeth in ensuring that equation works !! Enforcement by the State Fire Marshal to ensure proper tools and necessary support.....priceless ! I ask for your favorable report.

Stephen Wantz

President Carroll County Board of Commissioners