



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 330 - Civil Actions - Defenses - Fireman's Rule

SPONSOR: Senators Waldstreicher, *et al.*

HEARING DATE: February 12, 2020

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 330 - Civil Actions - Defenses - Fireman's Rule**, which would eliminate the 'fireman's rule' as a defense for civil liability for persons whose negligence led to the injury of public safety personnel during the course of their duties. This would allow first responders to sue (civil) parties whose actions/negligence force a course of action which leads to a public safety employee being injured

The fireman's rule is a common-law doctrine that public safety officers from suing for damages the parties whose actions necessitated the summoning of the public safety officers. While some exceptions already exist in Maryland to the rule, this bill will ensure that our first responders will be able be able seek restitution for damages stemming from gross and willful negligence, even while on-duty. As of 2019, 18 states have already moved on from the Fireman's rule,¹ and it is time to add Maryland to the list.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 330** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.

¹ Clark, John. "The Fireman's Rule," *Air Medical Journal*, 38, 2019, pg. 10, Accessed on Feb. 11, 2020, at [https://www.airmedicaljournal.com/article/S1067-991X\(18\)30327-4/pdf](https://www.airmedicaljournal.com/article/S1067-991X(18)30327-4/pdf)