



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 1024

DATE: February 25, 2020

SPONSOR: Delegate M. Jackson, *et al.*

ASSIGNED TO: Judiciary

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (sara.morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Police)

Criminal Law – Public Safety – Interference With Agencies and Services – Prohibitions

House Bill 1024 would prohibit a person from deliberately misusing Maryland's 9-1-1 system to make calls or send data that annoys, abuses, torments, or harasses a public safety answering point (PSAP) or public safety agency to intentionally trigger an emergency response or impair the function of the 9-1-1 system. Violators would be guilty of a felony and on conviction be subject to imprisonment not to exceed five years or a fine not to exceed \$25,000 or both. Montgomery County Department of Police supports this legislation.

This bill is based on the December 2019 report of the two-year Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1 Across Maryland that was established by the General Assembly in 2018 to study and make recommendations regarding next generation 9-1-1 emergency communication services. The Commission identified the need to update Maryland law to combat complex and sophisticated cyberattacks and telephone misuse that could disrupt or disable PSAP operations that could lead to severe consequences to Maryland's Next Generation 9-1-1 system (NG911). House Bill 1024 includes critical updates to sections of the Criminal Law Article addressing misuse of telephone facilities and equipment, unauthorized access to computer systems and software, and expanded prohibitions for making false statements to a PSAP.

House Bill 1024 is needed to protect Maryland's NG911 public safety infrastructure from cyber threats and vulnerabilities as identified by the Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1 Across Maryland. Montgomery County Department of Police respectfully requests that the Committee adopt a favorable report on the bill.