

CE Ball 2021- SB 658 Maryland Department of Emerge

Uploaded by: Ball, Calvin

Position: FAV



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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February 17, 2021

Senator Paul Pinsky, Chair
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, MD 21041

Re: Testimony **IN SUPPORT** of SB 658: Maryland Department of Emergency Management –
Establishment and Transfer of Maryland 9-1-1 Board

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

I commend Vice Chair Kagan for her consistent leadership as Chair of the Commission to Advance Next Generation 911 Across Maryland and for her introduction of Senate Bill 658.

Senate Bill 658 would implement the Commission's recommendation to rename the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) as the Maryland Department of Emergency Management and make it a cabinet-level executive department. The MEMA director would become the Secretary of the Department of Emergency Management and report directly to the Governor. The bill would also transfer Maryland's 9-1-1 Board, currently housed under the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, to the proposed department while maintaining its autonomy and funding authority.

Maryland's current 9-1-1 infrastructure is aging, and current technologies are changing at a pace that exceeds our own system. As part of the Commission's legislative requirement to study and recommend "the ideal role and placement for the 9-1-1 Board within State government to best service its broad and evolving mission," the Commission has recommended placing it within a cabinet-level entity. Senate Bill 658 would make Maryland only one of nine states with an agency that oversees both 911 operations and emergency management.

As a former firefighter and EMT, I have prioritized public safety as County Executive. Our Administration has already selected a vendor to provide Next Generation Core Services to Howard County. Last year, I signed Council Bill 59-2020, which designated the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services as the county enforcement authority for the 9-1-1 direct dialing required under "Kari's Law." Howard County's FY21 budget also funded two new Police Department positions to fortify Next Generation 911 system operations.

First responders across the state continue to respond to service calls to keep our residents safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. They will significantly benefit from a state-level department equipped to strengthen Next Generation 911 standards. Senate Bill 658 will elevate the importance of emergency management in Maryland and strengthen support to local jurisdictions before, during, and after crises occur.

Thank you for your consideration and I urge a favorable report on SB 658.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive

UMB_SB68_SB658.pdf

Uploaded by: Bratt, Jonathan

Position: FAV

TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Michael A. Jackson
The Honorable Clarence K. Lam
The Honorable Edward R. Reilly

RE: **FAVORABLE** – Senate Bill 68 & Senate Bill 658

Date: February 15th, 2021

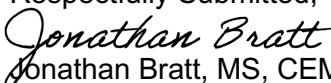
The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) supports both Senate Bills 68 and 658. Both bills enhance Maryland's ability to create a more prepared and resilient higher education community by creating a cabinet-level state emergency management department more capable of leading and directing statewide emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Emergency management is a multidisciplinary, coordinated, and collaborative endeavor to overcome some of our most complex challenges. Solving these problems requires vast resources, the flexibility to adapt to ever-changing environments, and the ability to implement innovative solutions. While the Maryland Department of the military has served as an excellent incubator for our emergency management system, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) needs to become a separate, cabinet-level entity, to maximally and efficiently fulfill its charge.

In its current form, MEMA is accountable for Maryland's resiliency and preparedness efforts but is significantly limited in its ability and authority. Senate Bills 68 and 658 remedies these limitations by elevating the organization and its leadership to a position of both stature and access. The proposed changes enhance the existing emergency management organization by creating a state emergency management function that is a recognized leader, removes unneeded layers of bureaucracy, and can directly advise its partner emergency management organizations and leadership within state government. By enacting either Senate Bills 68 or 658, Maryland will also join the ranks of at least 15 other states who have likewise elevated their emergency management organization to a cabinet-level department that reports directly to the Governor.

As UMB works to build its own emergency management department, we look forward to partnering with a newly enhanced state emergency management agency that can effectively lead disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation initiatives across the state. Accordingly, UMB urges a **FAVORABLE** report for both Senate bills 68 and 658.

Respectfully Submitted,


Jonathan Bratt, MS, CEM, NRP

Chief Brooks Testimony SB658 Feb 2021.pdf

Uploaded by: Brooks III, Richard

Position: FAV

Chief Richard K. Brooks, III
[Cecil County Director of Emergency Services, Retired]
Senate Bill 658 -- Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 1pm
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
SUPPORT

Even though I'm on vacation, I am taking time to share my strong support for SB658. As a former member of the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) Commission, I understand the importance of this modest government reorganization related to public safety. Specifically, the proposed legislation would shift the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to an independent agency, reporting directly to the Governor. And, it will remove the 9-1-1 Board from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) and house it under MEMA.

Some of you with grey hair (or no hair like me!) may remember the days of Civil Defense. You might even be old enough to recall air raid drills or sirens atop schools that sounded every Monday at 1:00 pm. Retired soldiers were the custodians of underground bunkers where water, crackers, and candy were stored for the population. There's a scene in the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life," where Jimmy Stewart is shown as a Warden. *That* was Civil Defense.

Now, Emergency Management is a cutting-edge field in our governments. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) relies on each states' Emergency Management Agencies as conduits to our local communities. Significant funding flows through this channel, allowing for preparedness and mitigation.

Emergency Management is no longer in the basement of an old building. It is on the front lines of coordinating protection from a variety of hazards and threats. In just the last few years, think of the disasters that have torn across our State-- hurricanes, blizzards, floods, tornados, and civil unrest-- to name a few. All of this was managed and coordinated by the Emergency Management Agencies in each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions.

The Governor regularly consults with the Executive Director of MEMA. However, the agency is still housed under the Military Department. Remember, when the Governor activates the National Guard, the coordination of their efforts and assignments is made by the Emergency Managers.

The time has come to upgrade MEMA to a Cabinet-level entity. This would provide the visibility it deserves and enhance its function, while also bringing the Maryland 9-1-1 Board (currently under DPSCS) to a place where it can work more easily with other public safety agencies with expertise in emergency services.

Over the past couple of years, you have enacted legislation based on recommendations from myself and my colleagues on the NG911 Commission to support our 9-1-1 systems. Shifting the 9-1-1 Board out of Corrections and placing it with Emergency Management provides an obvious partnership. MEMA's Director has already offered to provide service

and support in the areas of human resources (recruiting, training, and retaining of 9-1-1 Specialists), webpage maintenance, and procurement as needed.

As the funds committed to the 9-1-1 Board continue to be disbursed for key safety projects in each county, it makes sense that the responsible agency is entrenched in the local effort as well. MEMA is the contact point for all agencies in times of emergency, and through the Maryland Joint Operations Center, the State has the ability to provide 24/7 communication and coordination with these state and local agencies.

Therefore, today, we look to place the days of Civil Defense behind us and bring the Maryland Emergency Management Agency into the leadership role it deserves. At the same time, we must provide an appropriate place for the Maryland 9-1-1 Board to function and flourish in the Next Generation 9-1-1 environment.

Thank you for your time. **I urge your favorable report on SB 658.**

SB658_ NG911 MEMA Move Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Kagan, Sen. Cheryl

Position: FAV

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

—
Vice Chair
Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

—
Joint Audit Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB658: Maryland Department of Emergency Management - Establishment and Transfer of
Maryland 9-1-1 Board
Senate Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee
Wednesday, February 17, 2021 | 1:00 PM**

This Committee recently heard SB68, which would make the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) into the Maryland **Department** of Emergency Management. For the last three years as [Chair of the NG911 Commission](#), I have struggled to figure out the most efficient and effective emergency management structure for our state. After speaking with legislators who enacted similar changes in their states and collaborating with 9-1-1 Center Directors, the Commission unanimously recommended moving MEMA to an independent entity and placing the 9-1-1 Board (formerly the Emergency Number Systems Board) within MEMA.

Currently, MEMA is located within the Military Department, which can create confusion during an emergency. As a Cabinet-level Department, MEMA would be able to more effectively communicate with the Governor during an emergency. Additionally, the 9-1-1 Board is awkwardly situated with the prison guards as part of the Departments of Public Safety & Correctional Services (DPSCS). For access to critical public safety resources, it makes more sense to house the 9-1-1 Board with other emergency management experts. In 14 other states (AK, CT, GA, ID, IA, LA, MS, ND, OK, OR, PA, VA, WA, and WV.), the 9-1-1 Board is housed within the State's emergency management entity.

One of the key requirements for this move to be successful is the commitment that the 9-1-1 Board would continue to be autonomous. The 9-1-1 revenues could not be used by any other agency for any other purpose. Additionally, MEMA has committed to offering administrative/HR support to the Board to address the disparities in recruiting, training, and retaining 9-1-1 Specialists. MEMA has also offered to help with procurement (see [SB645](#)) and technical expertise on issues like the 9-1-1 Board's online presence. By contrast, DPSCS's website was out of date by a year. (The Commission in no way intends to disparage DPSCS as a parent organization; it was just never a good fit.) This proposal should provide all advantages and no disadvantages.

Shifting the 9-1-1 Board as an autonomous entity within the new Maryland Department of Emergency Management will make more sense and allow both to be more effective.

I urge a favorable report of SB658 so that we can more appropriately support our public safety personnel.

SB0658-EHE_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Kinnally, Kevin

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 658

Maryland Department of Emergency Management - Establishment and Transfer of Maryland 9-1-1 Board

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs Committee

Date: February 17, 2021

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 658. This bill—which is based on recommendations from the Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1 Across Maryland—designates the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) as a forward-facing, Cabinet-level entity, and transfers the 9-1-1 Board from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to MEMA.

Both MEMA and the 9-1-1 Board provide invaluable assistance, guidance, and leadership to their local partners. By aligning these efforts, SB 658 would bolster and enhance collaboration, communication, and coordination between the State and county governments in times of crisis, help Maryland continue its movement toward Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911), deliver these services equitably across the state, and assure effective coordination with communications providers.

Emergency management is a year-round process, a constant loop of preparation, training, testing, and revision that strengthens community preparedness and resilience. A strong partnership among state and local agencies is vital to emergency preparedness and response.

As a Cabinet-level entity, MEMA will be in a strong position to work directly with county emergency management offices to develop scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts and to better align key roles and responsibilities when disasters strike. This partnership will ensure the continuity of government in the face of an innumerable number of catastrophic events.

As Maryland's 9-1-1 system is a vital part of the State's emergency response and disaster preparedness network, MEMA is the proper entity to help advance the deployment of a statewide NG911 system that our residents expect and deserve, while also ensuring that the 9-1-1 Board retains its autonomy in terms of authority, enforcement, structure, training, and funding—including the management and distribution of grants.

COVID-19 has underscored the importance of a strong, well-defined, and seamless intergovernmental emergency management system. The necessary preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery must be a rigorous and coordinated intergovernmental, interagency, and interdisciplinary effort with regards to planning, training, exercising, technology, and standards.

SB 658 would strengthen and streamline collaboration in planning, response, and recovery efforts. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 658.

20210217 Testimony on SB658 Jack Markey MACo EM Af

Uploaded by: Markey, Jack

Position: FAV

Submitted to the Maryland Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the February 17, 2021 1:00pm bill hearing

Testimony of:

Jack Markey, Acting-President, Maryland Emergency Managers Association, an affiliate organization of the Maryland Association of Counties

Emergency Management is a function which exists to enhance the ability of the senior elected executive official of a government to effectively mobilize their community through coordinated efforts before, during, and after a wide range of crises, emergencies and disasters. At the federal, state, and the county level, officials are responsible to improve capabilities to reduce risk; warn the public and government leaders of impending emergencies; and coordinate response and recovery actions across a wide range of emergencies and disasters. In carrying out these functions, Emergency Management officials are responsible to the government executive who appoints them, but importantly are also a critical link to coordinate action between different levels of government in the same political subdivision's geography, or with other adjacent governments who may offer assistance. In Maryland this responsibility for action has both State and local organizations defined in the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Annotated Code (Md. Code Ann.). Currently the State-level organization, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), exists within the Maryland Military Department. While this organizational alignment has served Maryland well over the years, increasing demands for integration horizontally across State government agencies and with peer States in our region; with Maryland's county emergency management agencies; and with the federal government gives rise to the need to change our approach to move Maryland forward.

An example of this evolving responsibility for integration would be the responsibility for State government continuity of government and continuity of operations plans enacted as §14-116 of the Maryland Emergency Management Agency Act based on legislative action during the 2020 Maryland General Assembly session. This activity has primary implications within the State government, but also is critically important to be linked to similar local and federal government efforts. Maryland's residents rely on all levels of government to provide coordinated action during emergencies like the COVID-19 catastrophic health emergency we are working and living through as we consider this bill. The response to COVID-19 has illustrated that improvements in coordination between government levels are necessary.

A day to day function that exhibits this same coordination of government public safety resources in response to requests from residents and visitors is the operation of public safety answering points who deliver 9-1-1 services. Delivery of 9-1-1 services in Maryland is a local government responsibility, with oversight and significant leadership from the Maryland 9-1-1 Board and funding from the MD 9-1-1 Trust Fund. In the majority, but not all of the local governments, there is a direct organizational alignment between 9-1-1 and the broader Emergency Management function. Even in the counties where these two functions do not exist within the same government organization for locally determined reasons, they still share the same fundamental alignment of responsibilities. Uniting the two organizations with both State and local leadership and coordination responsibilities for 9-1-1 and Emergency Management at the State level is a sound choice. This bill's suggested actions would strengthen Maryland's capabilities to reduce risk from, and when necessary respond to, catastrophic health events, cybersecurity risks and attacks, environmental impacts of climate change, and many other complex problems facing our communities.

Submitted to the Maryland Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the February 17, 2021 1:00pm bill hearing

Testimony of:

Jack Markey, Acting-President, Maryland Emergency Managers Association, an affiliate organization of the Maryland Association of Counties

Specific to the two major actions recommended within the bill:

1. The Maryland Department of Emergency Management should be established as an independent State government agency to enhance the Governor's ability to direct action within the State government; coordinate with and between the State's local governments; and with peer States and the federal government before, during and after emergencies and disasters of all types.
2. 9-1-1 has a fundamental multi-agency communication, collaboration, and coordination role which would be enhanced by being more closely aligned with the Emergency Management functions at the State and local level. Moving the MD 9-1-1 Board's functions to the MD Department of Emergency Management, once established, would strengthen both 9-1-1 and Emergency Management coordination at the State and with the local organization for each political subdivision.

Rationale for supporting the bill:

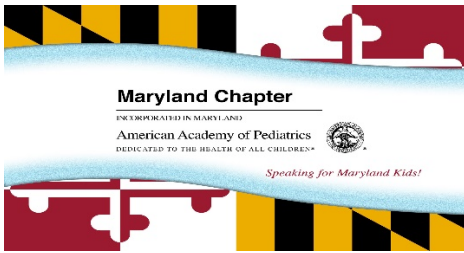
- At the local level Emergency Management exists to support, and reports directly to the senior elected official. The local Emergency Management Director also holds a responsibility as a Governor's appointee under the Maryland Emergency management Agency Act §14-113 to coordinate with State actions under and across county and when appropriate State boundaries;
- Emergency Management and 9-1-1 are critical multi-agency coordination entities operating at the county level under Md. Code Ann., §1-304 and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency Act, §14-109 to implement intra- and inter-jurisdictional actions by public safety agencies before, during, and after emergencies and disasters
- MEMA and the MD 9-1-1 Board have both provided invaluable assistance, guidance, and leadership to their local partners in their respective missions. Their positive impact could be increased by aligning their efforts at the State level inside the State government, and continuing and increasing their alignment with local efforts outside the State government
- SB658 as proposed seeks to elevate MEMA to an independent MD Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) and, via movement of MD 9-1-1 Board to MDEM once established, to align 9-1-1's public request for emergency assistance and dispatch activities with the existing body (Emergency Management) that provides public warning and public safety planning and coordination with senior elected officials across the State
- Speaking from my own personal experience, Frederick County carried out such an alignment of multi-agency functions and have derived significant benefits and efficiencies by doing so. This has resulted in better coordinated responses to serve those in distress, regardless of the jurisdiction of the agencies providing the services. The continuity of interagency and inter-jurisdictional effort before, during, and after emergencies and disasters is a worthy benefit for any challenges that may occur during the transition necessary to implement this bill.

I urge your support for Senate Bill 658 as written.

SB0658_FWA_MDAAP_Dept. of Emergency Management - E

Uploaded by: Kasemeyer, Pam

Position: FWA



TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: February 17, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** – Senate Bill 658 – *Maryland Department of Emergency Management – Establishment and Transfer of Maryland 9-1-1 Board*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support with amendment** for Senate Bill 658.

Senate Bill 658 establishes the Maryland Department of Emergency Management. The legislation essentially moves the current Maryland Emergency Management Agency, which resides in the Military Department, and raises its profile and authority by establishing it as an independent Department whose sole purpose is the focus of Emergency Management. The bill also transfers the 9-1-1 Board from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to the newly established Department of Emergency Management. Emergency Management is a broad term which includes a wide range of activities, issues, planning frameworks, and response constructs. It is a critical component of the State's ability to ensure a vibrant, strong, and responsive framework for responding to emergencies, whether they be triggered by weather, health, violence, or other contributing factors that require a coordinated and effective response.

MDAAP supports strengthening and prioritizing emergency management and believes the creation of a Department is a notable step in that direction. MDAAP also supports the movement of the Maryland 9-1-1 Board to the Department of Emergency Management. MDAAP would, however, like to raise an ongoing concern they have about the current emergency management and disaster preparedness framework that should be definitively addressed under the construct of a new Department. Disaster response and emergency management, as it relates to pediatrics, requires specific and focused consideration in all planning and program development initiatives. Currently, there is not a clear directive or framework for ensuring that there is a pediatric component incorporated into all planning efforts. MDAAP would request that Senate Bill 658 be amended to include a specific directive for the creation of a program for pediatric disaster preparedness and emergency management within the Department. This objective could be done through an amendment that creates the Office of Pediatric Emergency Management within the Department or it could be a directive that the newly created Department work with relevant stakeholders to study the creation of a pediatric emergency management office or division within the Department with an obligation to report back its findings and recommendations. With its amendment noted, MDAAP requests a favorable report.

For more information call:

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