



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

CHARLES R. CONNER III, ESQ.
Director of Government Affairs

JOEL N. BELLER
Deputy Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **SB 286**

TITLE: Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services – Modifications

SPONSOR: Senator Augustine

COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 9, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 286 – Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services – Modifications. The legislation would reprioritize the recipients of the Behavioral Health Crisis Response Grant Program to be programs that defer law enforcement interaction for individuals in crisis and provide grant funding for mobile crisis teams.

While the Baltimore County Police Department trains their officers extensively, they are not obligated by law to respond to non-law breaking emergencies. By putting such a responsibility under a mobile crisis team, law enforcement will be able to carry out their duties and mental health crises would receive the appropriate response by trained professionals. Such a policy would further Baltimore County’s goal of modernizing policing tactics and fostering trust between the public and local government institutions.

The Behavioral Health Crisis Response Grant Program would provide critical funding for crisis response groups, and one third of this funding would be designated for mobile crisis teams. These teams would not only provide immediate help, but would offer follow up services and arrange necessary appointments to obtain behavioral health services.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 286. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.