



## **SB714: Public Safety – 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System - Alterations**

**Monday, March 8, 2021**

### **Mission Critical Partners in support of SB714**

I represent Mission Critical Partners, a professional services firm that assists clients enhance and evolve their public safety and emergency communications systems and operations as the President of our Consulting Services Division. We provide consulting services to clients with public and life safety missions nationwide, consisting of public safety answering points (PSAPs) and emergency communications centers (ECCs) in nearly all 50 states and the District of Columbia. My career began as a 911 telecommunicator and first responder. I am a certified Emergency Number Professional (ENP) who has served numerous state and local governments, and Federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With a team of nearly 150 public safety and emergency communications subject matter experts nationwide, these comments draw on our company's breadth of experience as 911 and telecommunications professionals prior to becoming consultants, as well as our service to local, regional, and state 911 systems.

This bill is cutting edge and includes a number of efforts that would further strengthen the 911 system in Maryland by enhancing training and recruiting for 9-1-1 Specialists, implementing outage notification rules at a state level, expanding the Maryland 9-1-1 board representation, and further protecting the 9-1-1 funds. There are two areas that MCP would like to specifically address:

#### **9-1-1 Specialist Recruitment and Retention**

The repetitive exposure to difficult and traumatic events takes a toll on the 9-1-1 Specialists responding to emergency requests for service. They often do not have the time to process a difficult situation before moving on to the next emergency. This raises important considerations when hiring, onboarding, and training individuals that are in this role. This bill is forward thinking and provides valuable support to PSAP leadership and 9-1-1 Specialists by taking measures to help fill vacant positions and retain employees through training and the important recognition of psychological well-being for the invaluable people behind the headsets taking emergency requests for assistance.

#### **Outage Notification**

While there are outage notification rules at the federal level, there is still a major gap in PSAP notification when 9-1-1 service is impacted. These delays impact the PSAPs ability to implement contingency plans and notify the public in a timely manner. PSAPs have been working with service providers to address these delays and improve notification for many years, with limited success. This bill would make Maryland a leader in addressing the communications gap by incorporating more stringent rules to help raise awareness sooner when there are outages.

We strongly support this legislation as it works to further strengthen 911 operations in Maryland – ultimately improving the level of service provided to the residents during their time of need.



**MissionCriticalPartners**

I thank you for hearing these concerns, applaud you for taking action on this issue, and urge you to support SB714.

Respectfully submitted,

MISSION CRITICAL PARTNERS, LLC

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