

Est. 2017



Sen. Cheryl Kagan, Chair  
Steve Souder, Vice Chair

**SB633/HB1105: Next Generation 9-1-1 Commission Omnibus Legislation**  
Senate Finance Committee | March 8, 2022

Chair Kelley and Vice Chair Feldman:

I have dedicated more than 50 years of my life to 9-1-1. I was there at the beginning -- when the first 9-1-1 call was made in Alabama. I ran 9-1-1 Centers in four different jurisdictions of the National Capital Region: Washington, DC, Arlington and Fairfax Counties in VA, and Montgomery County, MD. In addition to my current tenure on the 9-1-1 Board, I have served for the past four years as Vice Chair of Maryland's Next Generation 9-1-1 Commission alongside Sen. Cheryl Kagan (Chair).

In our fourth and final year, we bring you this legislation to clean up and address several remaining issues within our 9-1-1 systems.

- Counties need the funds to update their emergency systems.
- 9-1-1 Specialists need confidential and easy access to mental health care.
- Implicit bias training can provide insights and skills that are needed for our "First, First Responders."
- Especially in these stressful times abroad, we must make sure that all 24 of Maryland's 9-1-1 Centers are protected against cyber-attacks.
- In the footsteps of nine other states, our 9-1-1 Specialists deserve to be reclassified as First Responders.

**I fully endorse this legislation, supported by the NG911 Commission, and I urge a favorable report on SB633.**

Respectfully submitted,

***Steve Souder***  
*Vice Chair, NG911 Commission*