



# Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

## Maryland Sheriffs' Association



### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Shane Pendergrass, Chair and  
Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Chief of Staff David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee  
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: March 4, 2022

RE: **HB 1109 – First Responders and Emergency Responders - Definition - 9-1-1 Dispatchers Included**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 1109**. This bill would include 9-1-1 Dispatchers within the definition of first responder and emergency responder.

Dispatchers touch every single call that a First Responder handles. They also serve as a lifeline both to First Responders on the scene, and citizens on the line. Not only are 9-1-1 Dispatchers sending Law Enforcement Officers, Fire Rescue Services, Emergency Medical Services, and other public safety services to the scene of an emergency, often times they serve as a direct First Responder by giving lifesaving instructions to the caller prior to the arrival of other units.

Designating dispatchers as first responders and emergency responders also changes their status under FLSA which would allow them to work an 80 hour pay period versus a 40-hour work week. This change would allow more flexibility in scheduling without negatively affecting overtime budgets. The changing designation also increases the dispatchers comp time accrual limits in line with other public safety designees, again creating more flexibility for budgets when facing staff shortages.

Dispatchers are integral to the operation of public safety services and ensure that people can access these lifesaving services in a timely manner. 9-1-1 Dispatchers should be recognized as first responders and emergency responders.

For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 1109** and urge a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.