

RECOMMEND A FAVORABLE REPORT ON SB749

Mr. Chairman
Members of the Committee

I urge a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 749. While other proponents will testify on the merits of the legislation itself, I would like to focus on the integrity of the process behind the legislation.

As the former Vice President of State Government Affairs for Comcast NBCUniversal, I was honored to serve on the state NG-911 Commission since its inception. This Commission worked on various issues related to 911 service including technology, Human Resources, public safety, finance, billing, mental health, and several others. The Commission had members who were subject matter-experts, and brought in expert witnesses on each of these issues, and each and every issue was comprehensively discussed, analyzed and considered before any legislative recommendations were proposed and approved. It was sometimes a long, arduous process, but it ensured that any legislative proposal was thoroughly vetted and had consensus before being introduced in Annapolis. There was broad consensus that Maryland should have 311 service to relieve the pressures on the 911 system.

Although the Commission is no longer active, the former members have all made themselves available as a resource to legislative leaders when new issues, challenges or questions arise concerning 911 and 311 services as they evolve. This template will ensure that Maryland will continue to be a leader among states in the deployment and administration of NG-911 services, and ensure the same for 311.

Special credit goes to Sen. Kagan and Sen. Reilly for their vision and leadership in keeping the Commission on task and focused on the most critical priorities related to NG-911 service. They constantly reminded the Commission of the importance of its work, and insisted that any legislative proposal must be cost-effective while ensuring that it improves NG-911 service to save lives. I am confident that they will extend their stewardship of 911 service to the new 311 service in Maryland.

I appreciate the opportunity to urge that SB749 receive a FAVORABLE REPORT.

Thank you.

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