



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Section
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: March 8, 2022

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 749 **Position:** Support

BILL TITLE: Public Safety – 3-1-1 Systems – Nonemergency Information

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:

This legislation seeks to establish the Maryland 3-1-1 Board under the Maryland Department of Emergency Management and to establish statewide and county 3-1-1 systems.

This legislation will establish a statewide 3-1-1 system for nonemergency government services, resources and information. Currently, the 9-1-1 call centers are being overwhelmed with non-emergency calls. While these calls are important, they take away valuable time that the 9-1-1 operators could be available for the urgent need for police, fire or EMS services.

The 3-1-1 call system would provide necessary services to all resident who may not have access to broadband or WiFi to access the services on-line. The 3-1-1 system would allow for important information to be shared, without overloading the emergency 9-1-1 system. Currently, Baltimore City provides a 3-1-1 system for residents and visitors. The system allows customers to report a nonemergency problem, request a service, check the status of a previously submitted service request and obtain information regarding City programs or events. By creating a statewide 3-1-1 system, all of the residents of the state and its visitors would be afforded the same access as is already established in Baltimore. The Baltimore call center handles over 1 million calls annually. By having this separate resource, emergency calls can be prioritized and handled more efficiently. By making this a statewide program, all citizens and visitors of Maryland will have the ability to obtain valuable services and information without overwhelming the 9-1-1 system. Thereby allowing true emergency calls to be handled in a separate streamlined system to ensure the urgent services are available.

For these reasons, the Department of State Police urges the Committee to give Senate Bill 749 a favorable report.