



January 14, 2022

Senate Bill 83 (SB0083)

Written Testimony in SUPPORT

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Good Afternoon members of the Senate,

My name is Randall Cunningham, and for the past year two years, I have been the chairman of the Cybersecurity and Technology subcommittee of the Maryland Next Generation 9-1-1 Commission, and I am also a Technology Manager for Harford County Department of Emergency Services.

I would like to provide some further insight into SB0057, Criminal Law – Public Safety – Interference With a Public Safety Answering Points.

Over the past 20 years supporting 9-1-1 in Harford County, I have witnessed significant changes from what was previously a very simple procedure of a resident calling for help, to what is progressing to be a very highly technical system, interconnected, and communicating across jurisdictions, and states.

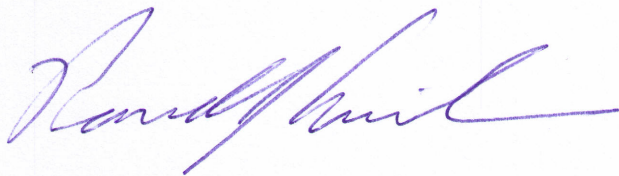
9-1-1 services in Maryland dates to 1979, and so do some of the laws protecting this service from criminal activity intended to harm or disrupt this service. The method of delivering these emergency calls to PSAP's (Public Safety Answering Point's, also known as "9-1-1 Center's") also has not changed since then, until recently when PSAP's have begun installing and using new technology, broadly known as "Next Generation 9-1-1", or NG9-1-1 as it is commonly referred to.

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These new call delivery systems are highly technical, IP data networks that can handle not only voice calls, but also receive important data such as text messages, automated crash data, and other IP Data information. Unfortunately, this type of technology also allows for a much broader methods of using the 9-1-1 system to request help. No longer do you have to pick up and phone and dial those 3 digits that may wind up saving your life, or a loved one's life, you can also send a text message, or have your watch call for help, after it has detected a medical emergency.

We have all witnessed attempts to infect and disable computer networks in every area of today's infrastructure. We must protect our Public Safety infrastructure from these attempts and establish penalties for those attempting to do so. In today's world the community expects to be able to communicate with 9-1-1 and public safety services and always have that system available.

The systems and technologies that allow that level of communication, unfortunately, also allows those with malicious intent to use those same systems as a pathway to cause harm and disruption. By supporting Senate Bill 83, you are allowing law enforcement and the judicial system to prosecute those malicious actors.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Randall Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.