



## **Senate Bill 749**

### *Public Safety - 3-1-1 Systems - Nonemergency Information*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

**WITH AMENDMENTS**

Date: March 8, 2022

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 749 WITH AMENDMENTS.**

This bill envisions a statewide 3-1-1 system for non-emergency government services, resources, and information to streamline service delivery for residents, businesses, and visitors across Maryland. While counties support a coordinated, stakeholder-driven approach to guide design and implement an interoperable 3-1-1 system, MACo urges amendments to guard against unintended costs for county governments.

SB 749 would establish the Maryland 3-1-1 Board within the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) to establish and operate a statewide 3-1-1 system capable of notifying the appropriate state or local agencies, programs, and departments of requests for non-emergency information. Counties could join a department-funded statewide system, as specified in the bill, or operate a separate, county-funded 3-1-1 system.

3-1-1 is a fast, simple, and convenient number for non-emergency issues and information on government services like refuse collection, snow removal, pothole repair, public transportation schedules, public hearings, and more. This service will make customer service more effective and more responsive, while also allowing 9-1-1 specialists to focus on emergency calls.

In 2019, the General Assembly passed Carl Henn's Law, landmark legislation to update state laws and the 9-1-1 financing system, to provide the flexibility and resources needed for the deployment of a statewide Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) system that our residents expect and deserve. As Maryland accelerates its move toward NG911, reducing the number of 9-1-1 calls related to non-emergency issues is critical.

Counties encourage efforts to enhance non-emergency communications in Maryland. MACo urges clarifying amendments to ensure county governments are not responsible for any costs related to the state-mandated 3-1-1 program. SB 749 urges a statewide effort to deliver these services equitably and assure coordination between the State and local governments across Maryland. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 749.