

Support Testimony

Uploaded by: Delegate Marvin Holmes

Position: FAV

MARVIN E. HOLMES, JR.
Legislative District 23B
Prince George's County

Environment and
Transportation Committee

Chair
Housing and Real Property
Subcommittee

Vice Chair
Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates

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Maryland Fire-EMS Coalition

March 28, 2023

Maryland Fire-EMS Coalition

The Fire/EMS Coalition unites Republicans and Democrats in support of fire/emergency services legislation that benefit all first responders. Becoming a member does not require taking positions on legislation; rather Coalition members are asked to pledge support in a way that best benefits fire/emergency services in their respective Legislative Districts.

Delegate Marvin E. Holmes, Chair

Support for HB 1252- Public Safety - Volunteer Company Assistance Fund - Alterations

Sponsored by: Delegates Schmidt and Holmes

Status - In the House - Hearing 3/30 at 1:00 p.m. (Appropriations)

The Maryland Fire-EMS Coalition Supports HB 1252 - Public Safety - Volunteer Company Assistance Fund – Alterations

**We urge the House Appropriations Committee to give
HB 1252 a Favorable Report.**

THE MARYLAND FIRE-EMS COALITION PARTICIPANTS REPRESENT THE MARYLAND SENATE AND THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES. VOTING MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS ARE: MARYLAND FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION (MFCA), MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION (MSFA), PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS OF MARYLAND (PFFMD), MARYLAND FIRE RESCUE INSTITUTE(MFRA), MARYLAND INSTITUTE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEMS (MIEMMS), STATE FIRE MARSHAL(OSFM), AND MARYLAND METRO FIRE CHIEF'S COUNCIL (MMFCC)

HB1252-APP_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: FAV



House Bill 1252

Public Safety - Volunteer Company Assistance Fund - Alterations

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations and Health and
Government Operations Committees

Date: March 30, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1252. This bill gives volunteer fire companies additional flexibility in using grants or loans issued from the Volunteer Company Assistance Fund (VCAF).

The VCAF was created to ensure adequate fire protection and rescue services across Maryland. Since the program's inception, the duties and challenges of volunteer firefighting have expanded considerably. Nationally, volunteer companies are facing a recruitment and retention crisis. This crisis comes at a time when many companies are being tasked with providing either auxiliary or primary emergency medical services (EMS), a charge these organizations were not intended to carry. While Maryland's firefighting service is currently strong and many companies have taken these new charges in stride, the road ahead presents a more challenging picture. The flexibility of HB 1252 is simple but also critical in relieving the strain felt by our volunteer fire companies. Furthermore, this flexibility is offered with no additional financial burden on the state.

HB 1252 is a commonsense way to better bolster the state's firefighting capabilities. As state leaders look at the future of firefighting, more nimble and innovative policy solutions are required to maintain the quality emergency services relied on by all Marylanders. Accordingly, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1252.

FWA - MDEM - HB1252 - VCAF Alterations.pdf

Uploaded by: Anna Sierra

Position: FWA



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Russell J. Strickland | Secretary

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS - HB1252
Public Safety - Voluntary Company Assistance Fund - Alterations

Maryland Department of Emergency Management
Appropriations Committee
Hearing Date: 30 MAR 2023

Chairman Ben Barnes
Appropriations Committee
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chairman Barnes,

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes **in support with amendments of HB1252 - Public Safety - Voluntary Company Assistance Fund - Alterations.**

HB1252 expands the current Voluntary Company Assistance Fund (VCAF) authorized uses to include EMS equipment, facilities which house firefighting and EMS equipment, and facilities which house fire and rescue administrative functions, community assembly, and emergency shelter functions. The bill also streamlines the reporting requirements for the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA). MDEM supports these changes as they reflect the needs of local volunteer fire and rescue companies across the State.

MDEM requests one technical amendment to this bill to clarify that MDEM is the Department responsible for the program. Historically, as an agency under the Military Department, Emergency Management has administered the program. When MDEM was formed in October 2021, the update to this portion of statute was overlooked. Specifically, we are requesting the following change:

Section 8-201(c)

"Department" means the ~~Military Department~~ **DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.**



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Russell J. Strickland | Secretary

MDEM can confirm the support of both the Military Department and the MSFA for this technical amendment, and has confirmed with Delegate Schmidt the amendment is acceptable.

In conclusion, MDEM urges a favorable report with the proposed amendments to HB1252 - Public Safety - Voluntary Company Assistance Fund - Alterations.

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Sierra, MDEM legislative liaison:
anna.sierra1@maryland.gov.