



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

March 16, 2023

**Committee:** House Appropriations

**Bill:** HB 788 – Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting Within Maryland

**Position:** Support with Amendments

**Reason for Position:**

MML strongly supports HB 788, the creation of a Commission to recruit and retain career and volunteer firefighters in our State. We also greatly appreciate our meaningful inclusion on the Commission, as local governments employ/incentivize career and volunteer firefighter services for our communities. As the bill's preamble states, we all benefit from strong and efficient fire, rescue, and emergency medical service response systems at the county and local levels. This Commission is an excellent step towards ensuring firefighting services can continue.

MML has one simple amendment request: to include emergency medical service (EMS) providers in addition to firefighters. Some fire departments have firefighter-only roles, while others require being cross-trained as a firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Municipal EMS providers are experiencing acute shortages in all EMS functions. Including EMS positions in this study would enable local governments to support our heroes and ensure the safety of our residents.

With adoption of these amendments, which have been approved in the Senate cross-file SB 414, MML would respectfully request a favorable report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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