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BILL NO.: **HB 788**

TITLE: Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting Within Maryland

SPONSOR: Delegate Rosenberg

COMMITTEE: Appropriations

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 16, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** HB 788 - Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting Within Maryland.

The Baltimore County Fire Department is considered a combination system which is defined as a Career/Volunteer response department. It is comprised of approximately 1000 career members as well as 1000 active response volunteers and another 1000 support system volunteers. In all, these individuals are stationed within 54 emergency response stations – 25 career stations and 29 volunteer stations.

As one of the largest combination emergency response systems in the state of Maryland that provides Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, the Department is experiencing significant challenges relating to recruitment and retention, both within career and volunteer divisions. This is not unique to Baltimore County as other emergency response departments nationwide are experiencing similar recruitment and retention challenges. The creation of a commission to study practices employed in other states to attract, support, and retain individuals will greatly enhance Maryland’s ability to create a sustainability plan for the future.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 788. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.