



March 16, 2023

House Bill 788

Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting Within Maryland

House Appropriations Committee

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 788 – Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting Within Maryland. This Bill would establish the Commission to study and make recommendations regarding various strategies and options to attract, support, and retain individuals in fire fighting roles and other issues to enhance and support career and volunteer fire fighting in the State.

Anne Arundel County values both our career and volunteer fire and rescue services, whom we rely upon for emergency response. Fiscal and staffing pressures have led to challenges recruiting and retaining members for volunteer organizations, and put response times and staffing levels at risk in the career department. An analysis of recruitment tactics, retention benefits, and long-range planning statewide to study and recommend best practices will benefit not only Anne Arundel County, but career and volunteer departments statewide to ensure that we can all meet the public safety needs of our residents.

For all of these reasons, Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 788.