

SB 3_988 Trust Fund_Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Allison Taylor

Position: FAV



Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the Mid-Atlantic States, Inc
2101 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

January 19, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 3 – Support

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

Kaiser Permanente is pleased to support SB 3, “Trust Fund – Funding.” This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Kaiser Permanente is the largest private integrated health care delivery system in the United States, delivering health care to over 12 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.¹ Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, which operates in Maryland, provides and coordinates complete health care services for over 825,000 members. In Maryland, we deliver care to approximately 475,000 members.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland’s transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland’s Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

The fund also supports developing and implementing a statewide initiative for the coordination and delivery of other programs along the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services in the State, including mobile crisis team services, crisis stabilization centers, and other acute behavioral health care services. These programs are needed to address the growing need for mental health services in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me at Allison.W.Taylor@kp.org or (202) 924-7496 with questions.

¹ Kaiser Permanente comprises Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., the nation’s largest not-for-profit health plan, and its health plan subsidiaries outside California and Hawaii; the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, which operates 39 hospitals and over 650 other clinical facilities; and the Permanente Medical Groups, self-governed physician group practices that exclusively contract with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and its health plan subsidiaries to meet the health needs of Kaiser Permanente’s members.

Kaiser Permanente
Comments on SB 3
January 19, 2023

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Allison Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Allison Taylor
Director of Government Relations
Kaiser Permanente

SB003_The Arc Maryland_FAV.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: FAV

SB003- 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding
Senate Budget & Tax Committee
January 19, 2023 at 1:30 PM

Position: Support

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We support **SB003 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding** because we know that additional investment in this lifeline is necessary to support the continuance and anticipated growth of critical services for people in crisis; services that people with IDD who have co-occurring mental health conditions may need in crisis.

The goal of the 988 Lifeline is to provide **immediate crisis intervention and support**. Having this immediate help is surely life-saving, and, as this lifeline is on the continuum of crisis prevention and response, it alleviates strain on emergency rooms and First Responders. Trained crisis counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer 988 calls or texts, respond/actively listen to the caller, provide immediate support, and provide needed resources.

Since last year, when Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund for the transition to, and expansion of, crisis services, the demand for services has grown. The increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 now requires continued and enhanced state investment to meet needs.

Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support now, perhaps more than ever^{1,2} and investing in the 988 Lifeline is a critical component of our community health system. SB003 would ensure Maryland's 988 system will be better suited to handle the rising call and text volume of people seeking crises services, as well as ensure individuals are connected to the services they desperately need to survive and thrive.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report from the committee on SB003.

Sincerely,



Ande Kolp

Executive Director

akolp@thearcmd.org, 443-851-9351, www.thearcmd.org

¹ [State of Mental Health in America 2023 | Mental Health America \(mhanational.org\)](https://www.mhanational.org/state-of-mental-health-in-america-2023)

² [Youth suicide attempts soared during pandemic, CDC report says \(nbcnews.com\)](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/youth-suicide-attempts-soared-during-pandemic-cdc-report-says-nbcnews.com)

Health Care for the Homeless - 2023 SB 3 FAV - 988

Uploaded by: Ann Ciekot

Position: FAV

**HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY
IN SUPPORT OF**

Senate Bill 3 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

Senate Finance Committee

January 19, 2023



Health Care for the Homeless supports SB 3, which requires \$12 million be allocated to the 988 Trust Fund in support of the 988 Lifeline's suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis services in Maryland.

Health Care for the Homeless sees clients with a range of needs, including clients with behavioral health crisis needs. For those clients, it is critical that we have an accessible system in place that providers and clients alike can rely upon to support their needs.

Congress designated 988 as the new phone number the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In July 2022, 988 went live, resulting in phone companies routing calls to local crisis call centers that are part of the Lifeline network. The local crisis call centers provide 24/7 free, confidential emotional support to people calling for help. Calls to the Lifeline have significantly increased and are expected to continue to grow.

We believe Maryland must provide funding to ensure the regional call centers have adequate staff, and to ensure crisis response services such as crisis stabilization centers and mobile response teams are available to meet people's needs.

421 Fallsway
Baltimore, MD 21202
phone: 410-837-5533
fax: 410-837-8020
www.hchmd.org
[@hchomeless](https://twitter.com/hchomeless)

Everyone deserves to go home.

SB3_MCF_Fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Ann Geddes

Position: FAV



SB 3 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Committee: Budget and Taxation

Date: January 19, 2022

POSITION: Support

The Maryland Coalition of Families: Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) helps families who care for a loved one with behavioral health needs. Using personal experience, our staff provide one-to-one peer support and navigation services to family members with a child, youth or adult with a mental health, substance use or gambling issue.

MCF strongly supports SB 3.

SB 3 would provide much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

The need for 988 is greater than ever. The mental health of people has dramatically worsened in the wake of the COVID pandemic. Adults saw an increase in rates of depression from 6% to 25% from 2019 to 2021.¹ Emergency department visits for potential suicidality for youth aged 12-17 increased 39% from 2019 to 2021.² The United States and Maryland are experiencing a mental health crisis, and this is especially true of youth. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (November 2022). Anxiety and Depression.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (June 2021). Emergency Department Visits for Suspected Suicide Attempts among Persons Aged 12-25 Years Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic – United States, January 2019-May 2021.

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and the Children's Hospital Association (CHA) joined together to declare a National State of Emergency in Children's Mental Health. Study after study has documented the worsened mental health of youth since the onset of the COVID pandemic.

Already 988 has been making a difference in people's lives. When the increase in utilization of the suicide lifeline has been measured, significant increases have been found. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline received over 1.7 million calls, texts and chats in its first five months. That's nearly half a million more than the old 10-digit Suicide Prevention Lifeline fielded during the same period the year before.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed.

MCF urges a favorable report on SB 3.

**Contact: Ann Geddes
Director of Public Policy
The Maryland Coalition of Families
8950 State Route 108
Columbia, MD 21045
ageddes@mdcoalition.org
443-926-3396**

SB3 - Johns Hopkins - Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Annie Coble

Position: FAV

SB3
Favorable

TO: The Honorable Melony Griffith, Chair
Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Annie Coble
Assistant Director, State Affairs, Johns Hopkins University and Medicine

DATE: January 18, 2023

RE: SB3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

Johns Hopkins University and Medicine is pleased to **support SB3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding**. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

This Fund is to provide reimbursement for the costs associated with maintaining 9-8-8 as the designated National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Starting in July 2022, all phone companies started to route 988 calls to local crisis call centers that are part of the Lifeline network. The local crisis call centers provide 24/7 free, confidential emotional support to people calling for help. Since going live, call volume to 988 has increased 40% and Maryland needs to ensure that its existing eight local call centers are adequately resourced to support this influx of calls for help.

The need for expanded crisis services support is demonstrated by the volume of people brought to hospital emergency departments under emergency petition. Approximately 60% of people brought to a hospital ED are discharged. They do not need inpatient care, but they are in crisis and need assistance. Expanded crisis services like 988 can help address this need. For example 80% of calls to 988 are resolved over the phone.

Johns Hopkins Medicine provides behavioral health crisis services to Marylanders throughout the State. Services are provided through our emergency departments and communities services. Seventeen hospitals, along with three local behavioral authorities and community organizations across Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County and Howard County were awarded a grant as a part of the Greater Baltimore Regional Integrated Crisis System (GBRICS). GBRICS aims to address behavioral health crises through a robust crisis hotline and referral system and increased access to mobile crisis services, which helps to serve individuals in the community instead of through the criminal justice system or hospital emergency departments. 988 is a vital tool for achieving the goals of GBRICS.

Maryland should protect this valuable, lifesaving resource, by ensuring continued funding of the 9-8-8 Trust Fund. **Johns Hopkins urges the Senate Finance Committee to move favorably SB3.**

EveryMind Written Testimony - SB3 988 Trust Fund -

Uploaded by: Ariel Gordon

Position: FAV

January 17, 2023

**Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding

EveryMind, a nonprofit organization, strengthens communities and empowers individuals to reach optimal mental wellness. EveryMind has positively impacted the mental health and wellness of children, youth, adults, veterans, and families in Maryland for more than 65 years. Based in Rockville, EveryMind offers community education like the evidence-based Mental Health First Aid training and implements various programs and direct services for every stage of life from youth to older adults. This includes operation of the 24/7 hotline in Montgomery County. We are one of the centers that has answered the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – now 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - since 2005. We are staffed by trained Hotline counselors that provide supportive listening, information and resources, and crisis intervention (including suicide assessments) through phone, text, and chat services. Our hotline is one of eight 988 Lifeline centers in Maryland and one of only three that offer text and chat services.

EveryMind is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland members of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline centers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The hotlines that make up Maryland's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network have provided free, 24/7 support and safety planning to residents for decades. The increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

We continue to see the need for 988 as demand for our services is now triple the calls, texts, and chats we saw during the same time last year. Much of that demand is from youth ages 24 and younger. To meet the increased need, our Crisis Hotline Counselors receive training in mental health, suicide prevention, intervention, and safety planning, as well as the needs of communities that are at higher risk of suicide such as the LGBTQIA+, older adults, and people of color. We are hiring new Hotline positions to help us meet the demand for suicide prevention services and to make sure we are there when someone reaches out. As a center accredited by the American Association of Suicidology, EveryMind understands how the services provided on the 988 Lifeline save lives and keep our friends and neighbors out of the hospital, jail, and even the morgue. Our support is not only vital – it is money saving to the County, the State, and constituents.

Maryland can build on its foundation to create the robust 988 Lifeline network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. **EveryMind urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.**

SB 3_PJC_Favorable_BT.pdf

Uploaded by: Ashley Black

Position: FAV



Ashley Black, Staff Attorney
Public Justice Center
201 North Charles Street, Suite 1200
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
410-625-9409, ext. 224
blacka@publicjustice.org

SB 3
9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding
Hearing of The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
January 19, 2023
1:30 PM

SUPPORT

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization which seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Health and Benefits Equity Project advocates for policies and practices that are designed to improve the overall health of Marylanders struggling to make ends meet, with the explicit goal to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes. **PJC strongly supports SB 3**, which would require the Governor to include in the annual budget for FY 2025 an appropriation of \$12,000,000 to the 9-8-8 Trust Fund.

We thank the Maryland General Assembly for passing SB 241 (2022) which established the 9-8-8 Trust Fund and helped ensure that when 9-8-8 went live as the designated official phone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis would have an easy pathway to local crisis services. The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting isolation and job loss created an increased need for on-demand behavioral health crisis services for children and adults in Maryland and a nationwide increase in calls to crisis hotlines. Although mental illness impacts all races, ethnicities and other identities, research supports that people of color and individuals identifying as LGBTQ are disproportionately impacted.¹ Similarly, substance use disorder is increasing among low-income individuals.

Maryland cannot effectively meet the needs of Maryland's adults and children in crisis without sustainable funding for crisis response services. If passed, SB 3 would create a steady funding source for much needed services, including crisis call centers, mobile crisis teams services and crisis stabilization centers. Increasing the

¹ Though 21% of all adults in the United States experience a 12-month prevalence of any mental illness, American Native or Alaska Native (19%), Hispanic or Latinx (18%), Black (17%), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders (17%) and Asian (14%) adults experience a 12-month prevalence of any mental illness compared to white adults (22%). 44% of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults experience a 12-month prevalence of any mental illness. NAMI, *You Are Not Alone Statistics* (2020), https://www.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMI-Media/Infographics/NAMI_YouAreNotAlone_2020_FINAL.pdf.

availability of these services would help children and adults receive the care they need in the community and avoid unnecessary hospitalization.

For these reasons, the Public Justice Center urges the committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report for **SB 3**. If you have any questions about this testimony, please contact Ashley Black at 410-625-9409 ext. 224 or blacka@publicjustice.org.

BMHA 988 Letter of Support January 19 2023 hearing

Uploaded by: Cheryl Maxwell

Position: FAV



#BLACKMINDSMATTER

January 19, 2023
Senate Budget & Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT
SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding

The Black Mental Health Alliance (BMHA) exist to promote a holistic, culturally relevant approach to the development and sustainment of mental health programs and services for African Americans and other persons of color.

The Black Mental Health Alliance is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. This Bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed.

Why is this so important? The public demand is increasing. the Black Mental Health Alliance encourages the utilization of such a critical resource. CALL 988 is a helpline that offers free and confidential emergency emotional support from mental health specialists, 24/7.

The Black Mental Health Alliance urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.

SB0003 988 Trust Fund.pdf

Uploaded by: Dan Martin

Position: FAV

Senate Bill 3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding
Budget and Taxation Committee
January 19, 2023
Position: SUPPORT

Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) is a nonprofit education and advocacy organization that brings together consumers, families, clinicians, advocates and concerned citizens for unified action in all aspects of mental health and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as behavioral health). We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of Senate Bill 3.

SB 3 provides additional funding for Maryland's 988 Trust Fund.

In 2022 the Maryland General Assembly established the 988 Trust Fund to reimburse for costs associated with designating and maintaining 988 as the new universal telephone number for the state's suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline and for developing and implementing a statewide continuum of behavioral health crisis response services.

Challenges in accessing quality mental health and substance use disorder services in the community results far too often in Marylanders calling police or going to hospital emergency departments when experiencing a behavioral health crisis. These options are rarely the most appropriate or effective way of deescalating a crisis.

Behavioral health crisis response services, on the other hand, are developed and designed specifically to address the unique needs of individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use emergency. They provide services and supports necessary to stabilize the immediate crisis and linkages to community resources that can help maintain that stability.

Maryland's crisis call centers provide free, confidential, 24/7 support and referrals to care for Marylanders in crisis. These centers have seen increased call volumes over the past year as demand for behavioral health services has increased and public awareness about 988 has grown. This requires an additional investment to ensure our call centers have everything they need to effectively handle this influx of new calls.

For these reasons, MHAMD supports SB 3 and we urge a favorable report.

For more information, please contact Dan Martin at (410) 978-8865

SB 3_988 Trust Fund - Funding_BHSB_FAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Dan Rabbitt

Position: FAV



January 19, 2023

Senate Budget & Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT
SB 3 - 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) is a nonprofit organization that serves as the local behavioral health authority (LBHA) for Baltimore City. BHSB works to increase access to a full range of quality behavioral health (mental health and substance use) services and advocates for innovative approaches to prevention, early intervention, treatment, crisis response, and recovery for individuals, families, and communities. Baltimore City represents nearly 35 percent of the public behavioral health system in Maryland, serving over 78,000 people with mental illness and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as “behavioral health”) annually.

Behavioral Health System Baltimore strongly supports SB3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill will invest an additional \$12 million into the 988 Trust Fund in FY2025. This funding is needed to ensure the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network has dependable funding to increase capacity and strengthen 988 helpline services.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline launched nationwide in July of 2022, establishing the first universal three-digit phone number for suicidal and behavioral health crisis helpline services. The new number uses the existing Lifeline network of helpline providers, representing a transition from the previous ten-digit 1-800 number and not an entirely new service. Maryland’s 988 Lifeline network is made up of eight experienced community-based organizations that cover the entire state. They have been providing free, confidential, 24/7 supportive counseling and community resources for over twenty years and three providers now offer text and chat in addition to call services.

The transition to 988 is an exciting opportunity to raise the profile of Lifeline services and invest in these life-saving interventions. Maryland has taken several important steps to invest in its 988 Lifeline network and is well-positioned to continue strengthening its helplines. Last year, the General Assembly allocated \$5 million to support the 988 Lifeline, representing essentially the first time Lifeline providers received state funding for these services. The Lifeline has been undervalued and underfunded for decades and these state dollars have proven invaluable in keeping up with demand. This body also passed [SB241](#), which established the 988 Trust Fund to provide longer-term funding and support. The legislation directed \$5.5 million to the 988 Trust Fund in FY24 and SB3 will build on this to provide an additional \$12 million to support the network through FY25.

This infusion of funding is critical to keep up with the anticipated increase in call volume. In Baltimore, calls to our Here2Help Lifeline doubled during the pandemic and call volume has only continued to increase. Across the state, Lifeline call volume was 50% higher in December 2022 than in December 2021, while chat doubled, and texts increased five-fold. Overall, 2022 call, chat, and text volume was about 35% higher than 2021, with significant and ongoing increases starting in July with the transition to 988. The increase in demand is understandable, as Maryland communities have shown significant increases in mental health challenges. Everyone has been affected by the trauma, uncertainty, and isolation wrought by the pandemic, and this has hit young people especially hard. Marylanders need

access to more mental health services today than ever before and the 988 Lifeline is helping to meet that need.

The increase in Lifeline call, chat, and text contacts is also in line with a 2021 SAMHSA-funded analysis of likely Maryland demand for services and required funding. This analysis found the state would need \$10-17 million in the first year to support adequate capacity in the 988 Lifeline network and increased funding in every subsequent year as familiarity with 988 increased. The \$12 million allocation in SB3 is likely a significant underestimation for FY25, the third full year after the 988 transition and two years after the \$10-17 million SAMHSA-funded estimate for the first year. This is especially true considering the rising business costs due to inflation and a shortage of behavioral health workers that was not anticipated in the 2021 analysis. The requested \$12 million will be put to good use and provide a safe harbor for the funds, allowing the state and its 988 Lifeline network the security to plan through the Summer of 2025.

Continued and increased investment in the Maryland 988 Lifeline network is needed, and it will provide valuable returns in strengthened services and saved lives. **BHSB urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3 and further its investment in the Maryland 988 Trust Fund.**

For more information, please contact BHSB Policy Director Dan Rabbitt at 443-401-6142

SB0003_FAV_MDACEP_9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding.pdf

Uploaded by: Danna Kauffman

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
The Honorable Malcolm Augustine

FROM: Danna L. Kauffman
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
410-244-7000

DATE: January 19, 2023

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 3 – *9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding*

The Maryland Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (MDACEP), which represents the interests of emergency physicians and their patients throughout the State of Maryland, **supports** Senate Bill 3. This bill requires the Governor to provide a mandatory appropriation of \$12 million for the operation of the 9-8-8 Trust Fund. During the 2022 Session, the General Assembly passed, and the State enacted the 9-8-8 Trust Fund for the purpose of: (1) designating and maintaining 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline; and (2) developing and implementing a Statewide initiative for the coordination and delivery of the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services in the State.

In 2020, the federal government implemented the National Suicide Designation Act of 2020, which established 9-8-8 as a universal number for mental health crises and suicide prevention. In July 2022, 9-8-8 went live. All phone companies now route 9-8-8 calls to local crisis call centers that are part of the Lifeline network. The local crisis call centers provide 24/7 free, confidential, and emotional support to individuals calling for help. As the public learns of the presence and services of 9-8-8, it is expected that calls to the Lifeline will continue to significantly increase. The need for 9-8-8 and the access to a continuum of crisis services is greater than ever, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide has become a leading cause of death in the United States, with the rate the highest in ages 10-34 years old. Maryland needs to ensure that its existing eight local call centers are adequately resourced to support this influx of calls for help.

It is important to recognize that the services provided by 9-8-8 are not static but benefit other health care settings. Maryland emergency departments continue to be inundated with patients experiencing a mental health crisis. Too often, these patients, especially pediatric and geriatric patients, wait hours, days, or weeks in the emergency departments waiting for community-based services. Not only is this detrimental to the health of the patient, but it also limits capacity for individuals more appropriately cared for in the emergency department, such as stroke, heart attack, and car accidents.

Senate Bill 3 ensures that the 9-8-8 Trust Fund has the appropriate and necessary resources to operate effectively and efficiently. MDACEP urges a favorable vote.

SB 3 988 Trust Fund_AFSP-Kaplan_Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Dorothy Kaplan

Position: FAV



**Senate Budget & Tax Committee
Written Testimony in Support of SB 3
January 19, 2023**

Dorothy A. Kaplan, Ph.D.
Board of Directors, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Maryland Chapter (AFSP-MD)
Address: 10216 Garden Way, Potomac MD 20854
Cell phone: (301) 335-1954
Email: DrDorothyKaplan@gmail.com

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) writes in strong support of SB 3 to provide much needed funding for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network through the established 988 Trust Fund. AFSP is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to “save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide” through research, education, and advocacy. AFSP is a thought leader in suicide prevention, the largest private funder of suicide prevention research, and a partner with other mental health organizations on public policy priorities.

State support for and investment in crisis support systems and call centers within the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network is critical. While the 988 Lifeline is a national program, federal funding is minimal for each center and largely goes toward managing call routing, best practice standards, public messaging, and technical assistance. Local crisis centers therefore rely on funding from state and local contributors to operate and grow.

While I am representing AFSP in providing this testimony, I also currently serve on the Maryland Governor’s Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and Families and as a Commissioner on the Maryland Governor’s Commission on Suicide Prevention in which I chair the newly created postvention (support to individuals and communities to mitigate grief, distress, and increased suicide risk in the aftermath of a completed suicide) task force. I have been a licensed independently practicing Psychologist in the State of Maryland since 1986 and was employed for a decade as a subject matter expert in military psychological health care and evidence-based psychological research and clinical practices.

Suicide is a mental health and public health issue nationwide and the 11th leading cause of death overall in Maryland (CDC; 2021). Tragically, suicide is the third leading cause of death in Marylanders ages 10 – 34. Young people involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems; LGBTQ individuals; Black, Indigenous, and other people of color; and military Service members and Veterans are at even greater risk for suicide. I lost my uncle, grandfather, and mother to suicide. As a suicide loss survivor and a volunteer facilitator with AFSP programs that support suicide loss survivors (Healing Conversations, International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day), I can attest to the devastating impact of suicide and suicide attempts on individuals, families, and communities.

In January 2022, the Journal of the Medical Association (JAMA) published the first study to use nationally representative population data to assess the prevalence and risk factors for suicide attempts. The findings demonstrate a substantial increase in suicide attempts from 2008 – 2019. A prior suicide attempt is the most significant risk factor for a completed suicide; this knowledge terrified me when my oldest daughter in her teenage and young adult years experienced a protracted course of a severe eating disorder accompanied by suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts.

Although suicide attempts have increased over the past decade, the use of mental health services among those who have attempted suicide has not increased. In addition to engaging in population-wide suicide prevention efforts, this data strongly suggests a need to expand service accessibility and acceptability for these at-risk individuals (Bommersbach, Rosenheck, & Rhee, 2022). Accompanied by public education campaigns to normalize help-seeking in a crisis, 988 has the potential to engage suicide attempters in accessing mental health services.

As a practicing clinical psychologist who has worked with individuals who struggle with mental health conditions accompanied by suicidal thoughts, a parent who was in despair and desperate to keep her child alive during a protracted course of a life-threatening mental illness, and a daughter who lost her beloved mother to suicide, I have experienced a fragmented system of crisis care that relies on law enforcement, jails, and hospital emergency departments. This inherently ineffective approach to urgent and emergent behavioral health yields poor outcomes. The establishment of 988 as a national mental health crisis care system is an important component of access to quality mental health and effective suicide prevention.

An appropriately resourced 988 system consists of immediate access to an effective and coordinated system of suicide prevention crisis services. Crisis call centers are the hub of this integrated system which also includes access to mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization centers. Evaluations of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) have established the effectiveness of crisis line services as suicide prevention tools while also identifying the need for continued development of a robust and integrated crisis response system to meet the needs of individuals in mental health crisis (Gould, 2021).

Utilization of crisis call centers reduces the burden on emergency rooms, police, emergency responders, and other mental health emergency services. Almost 98% of crisis calls to the NSPL were de-escalated averting costly, highly restrictive responses from law enforcement and emergency medical services (988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, 2023). In a study of high-risk callers to the NSPL, most recipients interviewed reported that this intervention stopped them from taking their lives (79.6%) and kept them safe (90.6%) (Gould et al., 2017).

To increase access to crisis services, Lifeline's services now also include chat and texting. The users of these formats tend to be younger and have higher rates of suicidal ideation than callers. A study assessing the effectiveness of the Lifeline's Crisis Chat found that 2/3 of suicidal chatters reported that the chat had been helpful while almost half reported being less suicidal by the end of the chat. For a single-session chat intervention to achieve a reduction in suicidality in nearly half of chatters is a significant accomplishment that affords the opportunity for further suicide risk reduction and mental health interventions (Gould, Chowdhury, Lake et al., 2021).

The NSPL received over 2.6 million calls, chats, and texts in 2020. The Veteran's Crisis Line which shares the Lifeline's national toll-free number received 35,000 calls during the recent Afghanistan evacuation in mid-August 2021 (Washington Examiner, 2021). On July 16, 2022, the three-digit 988 dialing code replaced the Lifeline phone number. With the introduction of the 988 number and campaigns to increase public awareness about 988, call, chat, and text volume has further increased. In just the first month of 988's launch, data confirmed that calls to the Lifeline increased nationally by 45%. One month after the launch, in August 2022, there were 928 more calls made by Maryland residents to the Lifeline compared to August 2021, a 30% increase (988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, 2023).

Crisis line users are a high-risk population that require reliable and timely response and culturally competent local responders trained in suicide-specific assessment and best practices for crisis care (Hoffberg, Stearns-Yoder, and Brenner, 2020). Maryland's crisis call centers need the additional funding as called for in SB 3 to ensure they have adequate staffing and resources to meet increases in demand resulting from the 988 transition. The 988 model of care for mental health crisis care is cost-effective as demonstrated by numerous studies showing that crisis services reduce spending on emergency department visits and inpatient hospitalizations. Cost-savings are also realized through reduced use of law enforcement for mental health emergencies (Vibrant Emotional Health, 2021).

In November 2021, AFSP along with the American Psychological Association, and 13 additional organizations authored a consensus report of recommendations for the development of a comprehensive crisis response system (AFSP, 2021). As the report concludes, our nation has been failing those in mental health crisis. 988 is more than a new number to call; it is an opportunity to rethink how we can more effectively approach mental health, substance use disorders, and suicide prevention in our communities. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 3. The AFSP Maryland Chapter is grateful for your consideration of this critical bill and strongly urges your support.

REFERENCES

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, Mental Health America, National Association for Behavioral Healthcare, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Council for Mental Wellbeing, One Mind, Peg's Foundation, Steinberg Institute, The Kennedy Forum, Treatment Advocacy Center, & Well Being Trust (2021). Consensus Approach and Recommendations for the Creation of a Comprehensive Crisis Response System. AFSP/1621285890-crisis-lines-issue-brief-5-17-21.pdf
- Bommersbach, T.J., Rosenheck, R. & Rhee, G. (2022). National Trends of Mental Health Care Among US Adults Who Attempted Suicide in the Past 12 Months. JAMA Psychiatry. 10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2021.3958.
- Brest, M. (2021). Veterans Affairs suicide hotline received more than 35,000 calls during Afghanistan evacuation, Washington Examiner. Accessed at: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense/national-security/veterans-affairs-suicide-hotline-afghanistan>
- Curtin, S.C., Hedegaard, M.D., & Ahmad, F. B. (2021) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Vital Statistics Rapid Release, Report Number 16, Provisional Numbers and Rates of Suicide by Month and Demographic Characteristics: United States. Accessed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/VSRR016.pdf>
- Gould, M. S., Lake, A. M., Galfalvy, H., Kleinman, M., Munfakh, J.L., Wright, J., & McKeon, R. (2017). Follow-up with callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Evaluation of callers' perceptions of care. Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 48(1), 75-86.
- Gould, M. S., Lake, A. M. (2021). Suicide Prevention and 988: Beyond Beds Before, During and After COVID-19. Technical Assistance Collaborative Paper No. 3. Alexandria, VA: National



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

Maryland

Association of State Mental Health Program Directors., accessed at:

<http://www.nasmhpd.org/content/tac-assessment-papers>

Gould, M. S., Chowdhury, S., Lake, A. M., Galfalvy, H., Kleinman, M., Kuchuk, M., & McKeon, R. (2021). National Suicide Prevention Lifeline crisis chat interventions: Evaluation of chatters' perceptions of effectiveness. *Suicide and Life- Threatening Behavior*, 51, 1126–1137. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12795>

Hoffberg, A. S., Stearns-Yoder, K. A., & Brenner, L. A. (2020). The Effectiveness of Crisis Line Services: A Systematic Review. *Frontiers in public health*, 7, 399. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2019.00399>

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. (2023). Lifeline State Reports [PDF files]. Accessed at: <https://988lifeline.org/our-network/>

Vibrant Emotional Health. (2021). 988 and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline [PDF files]. Retrieved via e-mail correspondence.

Zeller-SB3-Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Eileen Zeller

Position: FAV

Senate Bill 3: 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding
Budget and Taxation Committee
January 19, 2023
Position: SUPPORT

Eileen Zeller, MPH
12808 Brighton Dam Road
Clarksville, MD 21029

My name is Eileen Zeller and I retired from the federal government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2018, where I was Lead Public Health Advisor in the Suicide Prevention Branch. In that role I managed a team of public health professionals responsible for national grant programs including the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Suicide Prevention Resource Center, and a range of state, tribal, and campus suicide prevention programs.

In retirement, I chair the Maryland Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention and serve on the board of directors of the Mental Health Association of Maryland. But today I am representing myself.

The Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention is dedicated to promoting comprehensive and coordinated programs and services designed to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicide attempts, and to promote resilience, hope, and healing. The Commission is charged with developing a state Suicide Prevention Plan every two years. In the 2022-2024 Plan that we submitted to the Governor this past fall, we called for strengthening Maryland's crisis care system, including integrating 988 with crisis response services.

The 9-8-8 Trust Fund addresses this issue by implementing a statewide initiative to coordinate and deliver the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services, including crisis call centers, mobile crisis team services, crisis stabilization centers, and other acute behavioral health care services.

Communities with a continuum of behavioral health crisis services provide people in crisis with appropriate care: the right care in the right place at the right time. They divert people from emergency rooms and from criminal justice involvement, and prevent hospital readmissions, overuse of law enforcement, and suicide.¹ Maryland's 9-8-8 crisis centers stand at the heart of that continuum.

As anticipated, Maryland's launch of 988 in July 2022 resulted in significant increases in crisis calls and texts. SB3 would increase the allocation for the 9-8-8 Trust Fund and help ensure sustainable funding so that Marylanders in crisis are connected to the services they desperately need, when they need them.

I therefore urge a favorable report on SB3.

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). *National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care – A Best Practice Toolkit*. 2020. <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/national-guidelines-for-behavioral-health-crisis-care-02242020.pdf>

SB003 988 Trust Fund- Funding.pdf

Uploaded by: Erin Dorrien

Position: FAV



Maryland
Hospital Association

Senate Bill 3- 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Position: *Support*

January 19, 2023

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 60 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of Senate Bill 3.

Hospital emergency departments are often the first point of contact or the facility of last resort for individuals suffering from a behavioral health crisis. Patients and families turn to an emergency department for care when they cannot find treatment in the community or when the condition worsens to a point where an individual is at risk of dying by suicide.

Between 2013 and 2021, emergency department visits for behavioral health conditions climbed from 10.5% to 18.3%. Analysis also shows patient acuity increased—meaning, there are more patients turning to emergency departments in crisis, and they are sicker when they get there.¹

The federally mandated transition to 9-8-8 as the behavioral health crisis helpline presents Maryland with an opportunity to transform care for those with behavioral health needs with the goal to reduce suicide deaths and overall behavioral health harm.

Maryland transitioned to 9-8-8 this summer, and since then, call volume has continued to rise. Last year, this body passed [SB241](#), which established the 9-8-8 trust fund and appropriated funding for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. Senate Bill 3 ensures this life-saving funding continues in fiscal year 2025.

The need is great, and it is imperative Maryland have a robust crisis services system to serve patients before they need to turn to emergency departments. The 9-8-8 trust fund dedicates funding for call centers, crisis stabilization centers, mobile crisis teams, and other components of a crisis system of care.

For these reasons, MHA urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 3.

For more information, please contact:
Erin Dorrien, Vice President, Policy
Edorrien@mhaonline.org

¹ HSCRC Case Mix Data

SB 3 .pdf

Uploaded by: Henry Bogdan

Position: FAV

January 19, 2023

**Senate Bill 3 -- 988 Trust Fund – Funding
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

Position: Support

Maryland Nonprofits is a statewide association of more than 1400 nonprofit organizations and institutions. We urge you to support Senate Bill 3 to provide much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning, capacity building and implementation for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed.

We urge you to give Senate Bill 3 a **Favorable Report**.

Xerox Scan_01182023141656.PDF

Uploaded by: Henry Meiser

Position: FAV

January 18th, 2023

TO: Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee

FROM: Henry Meiser, 14286 Solomons Island Road South Solomons, MD 20688
(240)-925-0600, henry.meiser@gmail.com

RE: SB 003

POSITION: In Favor

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Henry Meiser and I am a high school student from Calvert County, Maryland. In addition to my studies, I serve as the student representative to the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention, where I have served two terms working to represent the over 900,000 students in the State, and co-founded the nation's first student-lead school safety organization, SafeSchools USA. But today, I am here representing myself (not on behalf of the commission).

The Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention is dedicated to promoting comprehensive and coordinated programs and services designed to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicide attempts, and to promote resilience, hope, and healing. The Commission is charged with developing a state Suicide Prevention Plan every two years. In the 2022-2024 Plan that we submitted to the Governor this past fall, we called for strengthening Maryland's crisis care system, including integrating 988 with crisis response services across the State.

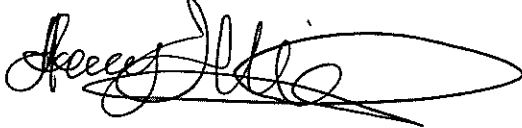
The 9-8-8 Trust Fund addresses this issue by implementing a statewide initiative to coordinate and deliver the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services, including crisis call centers, mobile crisis team services, crisis stabilization centers, and other acute behavioral health care services.

Communities with a continuum of behavioral health crisis services provide people in crisis with appropriate care: the right care in the right place at the right time. They divert people from emergency rooms and from criminal justice involvement, and prevent hospital readmissions, overuse of law enforcement, and suicide.¹ Maryland's 9-8-8 crisis centers stand at the heart of that continuum.

As anticipated, Maryland's launch of 988 in July 2022 resulted in significant increases in crisis calls and texts. As the demand for greater infrastructure for the 988 hotline, so too must the funding. SB3 would increase the allocation for the 9-8-8 Trust Fund and help ensure sustainable funding so that Marylanders in crisis are connected to the services they desperately need, when they need them.

I therefore urge a favorable report on SB3.

Most Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry J Meiser", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Henry J Meiser

SB3_CTIALestock_Favorable.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Jake Lestock

Position: FAV



**Testimony of
JAKE LESTOCK
CTIA**

In Support of Maryland Senate Bill 0003

**Before the
Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**

January 19, 2023

Chair, and members of the committee, on behalf of CTIA®, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, I submit this testimony in support of SB 3, which would make appropriations in the budget for the Maryland 9-8-8 Trust Fund. SB 3 takes proactive steps that coupled with utilizing federal 988 funding will ensure the successful implementation and administration of a state 988 program.

Mental health issues affect a number of Americans, especially in at-risk communities, including LGBTQ+, youth, people of color, people with disabilities, and veterans. Every day, wireless connects us to life-saving services and information when we need it most, and the 988 three-digit dial has made it even easier for Americans to access the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's crucial mental health support in times of crisis. Making it easier to access the Lifeline has been a priority for the wireless industry, and thanks to the efforts of wireless providers, Americans were able to dial 988 to reach the Lifeline a full year ahead of last year's July, 2022 deadline.



CTIA understands the importance of a workable state 988 funding framework. For such an important new service to benefit all Americans, states should fund 988 and related services through general fund revenue to ensure 988 programs receive sufficient funding. We support the efforts of Senator Augustine and SB 3 to appropriate \$12 million in state funding to the 9-8-8 Trust Fund.

CTIA and our member companies strongly urge that the committee report the bill favorably and appropriate state funding for this critical lifeline for Marylanders. The wireless industry looks forward to working with our federal and state counterparts to ensure that all Americans have access to the mental health support and services needed to prevent suicide.

WYFCS MD 988.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Leggour

Position: FAV

FUND MARYLAND 988 CAMPAIGN

Mental health and substance use crisis services for anyone, anywhere, anytime

Because, all Marylanders deserve equitable, timely, and effective mental health and substance use care, including behavioral health crisis care;

Because, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline launched in July 2022, establishing for the first time a national three-digit number for mental health and substance use crisis response;

Because, people who go to hospital emergency rooms for mental health and substance use crises may have to wait many hours to receive care;

Because, over-reliance on law enforcement for responding to behavioral health crises has led to inequitable access to care, poor health outcomes, and disproportionate arrest and incarceration for people of color;

Because, people with untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement;

Because, Marylanders have been forced to rely on hospital emergency rooms and law enforcement to provide mental health and substance use crisis response even though these are not the best settings for care;

Because, the COVID pandemic has made mental health and substance use worse for Marylanders, greatly increasing the number of people who are seeking help for mental health and substance use services;

Because, mental health and substance use crisis services are for anyone, anywhere, and anytime;

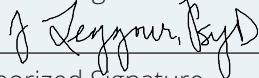
Because, the current system to treat mental health and substance use crises does not have the capacity to serve all those in need 24/7, 365 days a year across Maryland; and

Because, Marylanders deserve a well-operated and fully funded mental health and substance use crisis response system that they can depend on to deliver equitable, timely, and effective care in times of emergency.

Therefore, the undersigned organization supports 1) Investing in the Maryland 988 Lifeline network; 2) Expanding access to the full continuum of crisis response services; and 3) Integrating crisis response services into the broader system of care to divert more calls from 911 and reduce our reliance on law enforcement and emergency rooms for behavioral health crisis intervention.

Name of Organization/Individual (please print)

Number of Members



Authorized Signature

Contact Person (please print)

Date

Organization Street Address

County

City

State

Zip

Phone

Email

Return to: Behavioral Health System Baltimore, 100 S. Charles Street, Tower II, Baltimore, MD 21201,
ATTN: Daniel Rabbitt, **email:** MD988@bhsbaltimore.org. **Call 443-401-6142 with questions.**

1. What is 988?

It is the new easy-to-remember phone number for the 988 & Crisis Lifeline. The 988 Lifeline is available around the clock, 365 days a year. Counselors at local crisis call centers answer the calls and provide free, confidential advice and emotional support for people in distress. It is not only about answering calls but also about providing connection to community mental health and substance use services at critical moments for people across Maryland.

2. When did 988 go live?

The new 988 number launched in July 2022. All phone companies will now route 988 calls to local call centers that are a part of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

3. How will 988 help our communities?

Many people experiencing a mental health or substance use emergency call 911 or go to a hospital emergency room for help, which can cause delays in care, frustration, and potentially more harm than help for the person in distress. This is even more pronounced for people of color and other marginalized groups. Police are not well-equipped to deal with a mental health or substance use emergency, and their involvement too often leads to trauma, jail, or the inappropriate use of force – including the death of the person in need.

988 can serve as an alternative to calling 911 or going to the hospital emergency room for people facing a mental health or substance use emergency. Call center counselors are based locally and trained in crisis response, suicide prevention, and de-escalation. They can provide a range of support to resolve a situation over the phone. 988 counselors can ensure that people in crisis receive responsive, appropriate, and compassionate services, and reduce our reliance on law enforcement and hospitals.

4. What is the Fund MD988 Campaign?

The Fund MD988 Campaign is working to secure dedicated funding to support the continuum of behavioral health crisis services to meet Maryland's needs. Maryland currently does not provide 24/7 crisis services in all communities, and investments are needed to build out the 988 call centers and other crisis response services such as mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization centers. The Campaign secured over \$10 million in funding during the 2022 Maryland legislative session and aims to build on that success to continue to strengthen and grow the Maryland behavioral health crisis response system.

5. Why does Maryland need to invest in 988 and other crisis services?

Without expanding staff and services, Marylanders in distress will continue to turn to hospital emergency rooms. Maryland's local 988 call centers need funding to hire and train the staff needed to meet the projected demand for 988. Calls have already increased by 30% compared to 2021 and call volume will only continue to rise as more people learn about 988. Timely and dependable 988 responses, as well as other community interventions, are critical to preventing suicides, resolving crises, and saving lives.

6. How can I help the campaign?

988 benefits residents across Maryland – particularly those who have been under-served in the past. Please endorse this resolution, educate your network, and help advocate for the mental health and substance use services Marylanders need to be healthy and safe.

Trust Fund - Funding_FAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Johnathan Davis

Position: FAV

January 19, 2023

**Senate Budget & Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding

Baltimore Crisis Response Inc (BCRI) provides crisis services for Baltimore City and the surrounding area. BCRI manages and operates the 988 Regional Comprehensive Call Center serving Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carrol County and Howard County. Additionally, BCRI works closely with Baltimore Police Department in providing education and training to police and participating in the 911 Diversion Program. BCRI also provides general mobile crisis response for Baltimore City and provides several residential programs for adults needing support with psychiatric stabilization and substance abuse.

Johnathan Davis, Executive Director of Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

BCRI, along with its sub vendors, is expecting to answer up to 120,000 988 calls this year to support individuals in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County and Howard County. Additionally, BCRI serves up to 1,000 individuals in its residential programs yearly.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. **Johnathan Davis, Executive Director of Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.**

SB03.pdf

Uploaded by: Jonathan Dayton

Position: FAV



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA)

To the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair: Senator Guy Guzzone

January 18, 2023

Senate Bill 3: 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the Committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 3, 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding.

MRHA believes that all Marylanders, including those 1.8 million living in rural Maryland communities, deserve equitable, timely, and effective mental health and substance use care, including help in times of crisis. Funding will help promote existing and new behavioral health services in high need across Maryland.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Dayton, MS, NREMT, CNE, Executive Director

jdayton@mdruralhealth.org

SB03 FAV Final - NAMI.pdf

Uploaded by: Josh Howe

Position: FAV

January 19, 2023

Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and distinguished members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

The National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland and our 11 local affiliates across the state represent a statewide network of more than 45,000 families, individuals, community-based organizations, and service providers. NAMI Maryland is a non-profit that is dedicated to providing education, support, and advocacy for persons with mental illnesses, their families and the wider community.

As you are likely aware July 16, 2022 marked the launch of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, the first nationwide three-digit phone number for mental health and substance use crises. The new number builds off an existing Lifeline network of over 200 helplines across the country.

Maryland established a 988 Trust Fund with an initial funding level of \$5.5 million available starting in fiscal year 2024 for the purpose of developing and implementing a statewide initiative for the coordination and delivery of the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services in the State, including: (1) Crisis call centers; (2) Mobile crisis team services; (3) Crisis stabilization centers; and (4) Other acute behavioral health care services. SB 3 would require a state budget allocation of \$12 million for fiscal year 2025.

Many communities are committed to diverting people with mental illness away from the criminal justice system. However, in order to do so, communities need effective mental health services, such as outpatient, inpatient and crisis care and coordination. By more than doubling the allocation for the 9-8-8 Trust Fund, passage of **SB 3** will ensure Maryland's 9-8-8 system will be better suited to handle rising call/text volume of people seeking crises services, as well as ensure individuals are connected to the service they need.

NAMI MD urges a favorable report on SB03 – 988 Trust Fund - Funding.
Thank you,

MATOD - 2023 SB 3 FAV - 988 Trust Fund.pdf

Uploaded by: Joshua Grollmes

Position: FAV



Board of Directors 2021 - 2023

President

Josh Grollmes, MS
Serenity Health
JGrollmes@serenityllc.net

Secretary

Melissa Vail, LCPC
Sinai Hospital Addictions
Recovery Program (SHARP)
MAVail@lifebridgehealth.org

Treasurer

Babak Imanoel, D.O.
Northern Parkway Treatment
Services, BH Health Services
BabakImanoel@gmail.com

National AATOD Liaison

Kenneth Stoller, MD
Johns Hopkins Hospital
The Broadway Center
KStolle@jhmi.edu

Immediate Past President

Vickie Walters, LCSW-C
IBR/REACH Health Services
VWalters@ibrinc.org

Senate Budget & Tax Committee January 19, 2023 Support of Senate Bill 3

The Maryland Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (MATOD) urges a favorable opinion on SB 3. Our mission is to promote high-quality, effective medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction, so individuals, families, and communities can lead healthy lives in recovery and without stigma.

MATOD is pleased to support SB 3 - 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding. This bill mandates a one-time-only funding mandate of \$12 million for FY 2025 to ensure continued progress in the implementation of this essential service.

Congress designated 988 as the new phone number the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In July 2022, 988 went live. All phone companies now route calls to local crisis call centers that are part of the Lifeline network. The local crisis call centers provide 24/7 free, confidential emotional support to people calling for help.

Being able to give out the number 988 makes it much easier on staff and patients in the behavioral health field. This replaced a process where we gave out multiple 10 digit numbers to patients when completing personal safety plans. Sadly, most personal safety plans are discarded by patients before they even make it home. Being able to give them a 3 digit number makes it much easier for both the patients and staff to remember when dealing with crisis. We now need to make sure the funds are invested into the system so that people who need help can get it.

We urge a favorable opinion on SB 3.



c/o IBR/REACH Health Services
2104 Maryland Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21218



(410) 752-6080



www.matod.org

MATOD members include community and hospital based Opioid Treatment Programs, local Health Departments, local Addiction and Behavioral Health Authorities and Maryland organizations that support evidence-based Medication Assisted Treatment. MATOD members include thousands of highly trained and dedicated addiction counselors, clinical social workers, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, peer recovery specialists and dedicated staff who work every day to save and transform lives.

SB3_fav_AARP.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Kalla

Position: FAV



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpmc
facebook.com/aarpmc

**SB3 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding
FAVORABLE
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
January 19, 2023**

Good afternoon, Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee. I am Lois Meszaros, Ph.D. AARP member, and resident of Anne Arundel County. As you may know, AARP Maryland is one of the largest membership-based organizations in the Free State, encompassing almost 850,000 members. **AARP MD supports SB3 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding.** We thank Senator Augustine for sponsoring this legislation.

SB 3 provides that in fiscal year 2025, the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$12,000,000 to the 9–8–8 Trust Fund. This appropriation would support the Trust Funds’ efforts in developing and implementing a statewide initiative for the coordination and delivery of the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services in the State, including: (i) Crisis call centers; (ii) Mobile crisis team services; (iii) Crisis stabilization centers; and (iv) Other acute behavioral health care services.

At least one in five older Americans has a mental health condition. Among Medicare beneficiaries age 65 and older, the most common mental disorders are depression, anxiety, dementia, and other neurocognitive impairments. By 2030, the number of older people with such disorders is expected to double.

Mental disorders seldom occur in isolation and can often lead to serious physical health issues. However, they are frequently undiagnosed or misdiagnosed in older patients. Older adults are more likely than younger adults to receive inappropriate or inadequate mental health services. One reason is that primary care practitioners—who provide most mental health care under Medicare—have insufficient training in the assessment and treatment of mental disorders associated with aging. Perceived social stigma and denial can also impede accurate diagnosis and treatment.

While Medicare’s coverage of mental health and substance abuse services has improved over the years, restrictions that do not apply to other health services remain. These include a lifetime limit of 190 days for psychiatric care in freestanding psychiatric hospitals. Medicare covers some mental health-related preventive services with no cost-sharing, including annual screenings for depression and alcohol misuse screening. But coverage for subsequent services can be limited and should be increased.”

After retiring and returning to Severna Park, I began receiving calls from older adults saying that Novitas Solutions, Inc., which manages the insurance for Medicare patients, recommended they

contact me as I was new to the area and might be accepting new patients. These older adults had been unable to locate a therapist who was accepting new patients, as therapists are overwhelmed with referrals. These older adults were expressing feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression resulting from events such as losing loved ones during Covid, experiencing residual effects from having Covid and being isolated due to many of their previous activities going virtual. Many older adults do not have the equipment, funds to purchase the equipment, or the knowledge to function in the virtual realm. For many older adults this has become a frightening new world that they are finding difficult to navigate. Having a phone number (988) to call is a quick and easy way for them to get help and is easy to remember. By calling 988 they receive immediate access to a trained mental health professional who is available 24/7 and able to listen and assist with current behavioral health problems.

The development, implementation and expansion of mobile crisis team services has greatly benefitted older adults as it brings crisis services to them. Some older adults are no longer able to drive and obtaining transportation is both difficult and costly. Having a trained team come to their home with needed assistance rather than trying to get to an emergency room or doctor's office is so much more effective and efficient. Helping older adults get appointments within 24 to 48 hours has prevented crisis situations from escalating.

During my years of work, I have seen a major expansion in the request for behavioral health services. This is true for older adults who are experiencing a way of life that is less human contact and more social media. Older adults enjoy socializing, having lunch at the senior center and sitting next to their neighbors in church. They want to hug their grandchildren and talk to them not communicate by text. Having stabilization centers available where older adults can feel safe and get support is adding a needed service. Often removing a person from a toxic environment even briefly, will improve the situation.

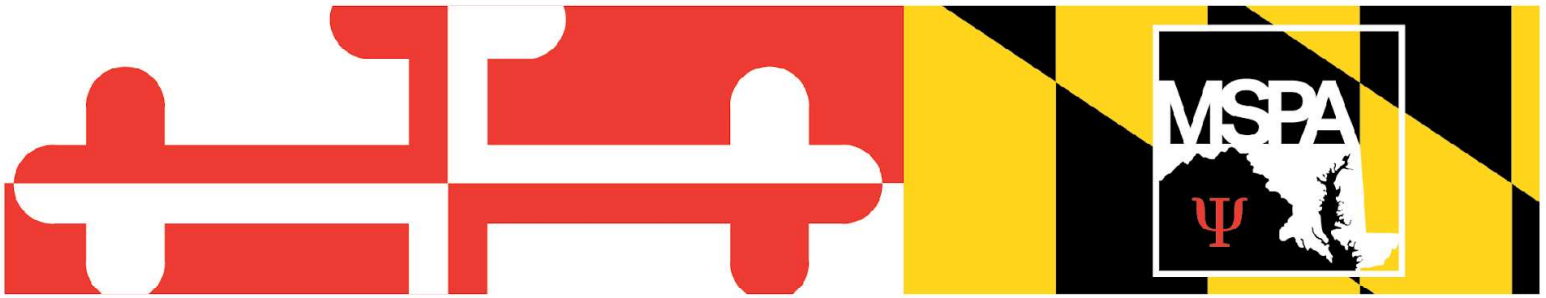
As a psychologist in Maryland, I am aware of the unmet need for services. People needing help are often waiting days and even months for services. The passage of this bill will help provide needed behavioral health services to thousands of people who are seeking crisis services.

For these reasons AARP Maryland supports SB3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding and respectfully requests the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to issue a favorable report. For questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.

SB3 Letter.pdf

Uploaded by: Katie Phipps

Position: FAV



Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 18, 2023

Bill: Senate Bill 3 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Position: Support

Dear Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA), a professional organization representing about 500 school psychologists in Maryland. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic wellbeing of students and families across the state. School psychologists provide comprehensive psychological services to Maryland's students, including counseling, consultation and assessment. We are acutely aware of the significant behavioral health needs of many of our students and their families. It is essential that as part of Maryland's system for addressing these needs we have in place an effective crisis response system. The newly established national 9-8-8 crisis line is an essential element in that system.

The Maryland School Psychologists' Association asks that the committee vote in favor of adequately funding this crisis hotline and the associated funding for the coordination and delivery of crises services for those experiencing behavioral health issues. Hotlines often serve as a frontline resource for people experiencing suicidality and other behavioral health crises. Not only do they work to lessen the immediacy of the crisis, but hotlines often serve as entry points into the world of behavioral health services, by providing those in crisis with resources they might not otherwise have thought to access. It is particularly important that this new system receive adequate funding as it becomes established in Maryland.

MSPA therefore urges you to favorably report on SB 3 to ensure adequate funding for this crisis hotline. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at legislative@mspaonline.org.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kathryn Phipps'.

Kathryn Phipps, M.Ed., Ed.S., NCSP
School Psychologist
Chair, Maryland School Psychologists' Association

cr_sb3988_20230117.pdf

Uploaded by: Kendall Ludwig

Position: FAV



good design for everyone • since 2007

January 17, 2023

Senate Budget & Tax Committee

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding

Since 2007, CurlyRed has provided fresh, captivating, and timeless design, branding, print, and web solutions for numerous companies and non-profits across the country.

CurlyRed is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

I, M. Kendall Ludwig, president and principal designer of CurlyRed, has experienced boats of both insomnia and anxiety since the pandemic started. Therapy and having a support system has been instrumental to my ongoing healing. I've realized just how important mental health can be and how important it is for Marylanders to get the help they need.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. CurlyRed urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.

Sincerely,

M. Kendall Ludwig
president and principal designer
CurlyRed

SB 3_HorizonFoundation_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Kerry Darragh

Position: FAV



January 19, 2023

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lisa Pearson
Chair

Nikki Highsmith Vernick
President & CEO

Christopher Fortune
Vice Chair

Mark Cissel
Treasurer

Gopi Suri
Secretary

Jonathan Ahn

Yvonne Commodore-
Mensah

Juliet Gilliam

Catherine Hamel

Brian Hepburn

Sharon Hoover

Stacie Hunt

Tracy Miller

Sekou Murphy

Yvette Rooks

Celiana Valero-Colon

David Wolf

Lanlan Xu

COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

BILL: SB 3 – 988 Trust Fund – Funding

POSITION: Support

The Horizon Foundation is Howard County's community health foundation and the largest independent health philanthropy in the state of Maryland. We lead community change so everyone in Howard County can live a longer, better life.

The Foundation is pleased to support SB 3 – 988 Trust Fund – Funding.

This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Significant gaps remain in making emergency crisis services for people with mental health needs more accessible. In Howard County, we continue to see stark racial disparities in mental health, especially among Black and Latino residents. In 2014-2016, suicide was the leading cause of death for youth ages 15-19 in Howard County.ⁱ Among these youth, young Latina women are most at risk of depression and planning a suicide. Nearly 50% of Latina high schoolers and 42% of multiracial female high schoolers said they felt sad and hopeless in comparison to 23% of White students and 26% of Black students.ⁱⁱ Among adults, Black residents are most likely to say they have been "bothered" by "feeling down, depressed or hopeless" and by "having little interest or pleasure in doing things," which are two indicators of risk for depression.ⁱⁱⁱ

These rates are startling and reflect larger systemic issues and the need for expanded mental health and behavioral health crisis services – including and beyond 988. Ensuring sustainable funding to support local crisis call centers and other crisis services is critical to meeting the needs of our community members and saving lives.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. The Horizon Foundation urges the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to pass SB 3. Thank you for your consideration.

-
- i. Howard County Health Department. (2018). Suicide Prevention, Howard County Youth. Retrieved from <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=6nrdbJIH7JI%3d&tabid=1390&portalid=0>
 - ii. Maryland Department of Health, Prevention and Health Promotion Administration. (2016). Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2016, Maryland High School Survey, p. 14. Retrieved from <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/ccdpc/Reports/Documents/2016%20YRBS%20YTS%20Reports/2016HowardHS%20Summary%20Tables.pdf>. Note: The original source for these data (Maryland Department of Health's Youth Risk Behavior Survey) breaks data down by the following categories: White, Black, Hispanic/ Latino, All Other Races and Multiple Races. This explains the lack of information on Asians in this segment of the report. We recognize this lack of differentiation is a common problem with public health statistics and underscores the need for more robust practices in disaggregating available data.
 - iii. OpinionWorks. (2018). 2018 Howard County Health Assessment Survey Data Tables. Unpublished data

2023 SB3 - 9-8-8 Trust Fund-Funding.Testimony.Mart

Uploaded by: Martha Nathanson

Position: FAV



CARE BRAVELY

SB3 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee – January 19, 2023

Testimony of Martha D. Nathanson, Esq., Vice President, Government Relations and Community Development LifeBridge Health

Position: **SUPPORT**

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB3. LifeBridge Health is a regional health system comprising Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, an independent academic medical center; Levindale Geriatric Center and Hospital in Baltimore; Northwest Hospital, a community hospital in Baltimore County; Carroll Hospital, a sole community hospital in Carroll County, and; Grace Medical Center in Baltimore (formerly Bon Secours Hospital).

Behavioral health crisis services and the suicide prevention lifeline are effective interventions that reduce the likelihood of inpatient hospitalization and help prevent tragic deaths due to suicide or overdose. The 988 national suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis hotline provides a once in a generation opportunity to strengthen Maryland's behavioral health system, and adequate funding such as the proposed \$12M mandated appropriation will ensure the needed services are provided.

We have consistently seen increased numbers of individuals in mental health or suicidal crisis present to our emergency rooms. Whether brought by EMS in an ambulance, or by law enforcement, or even by family members, these capable and well-meaning responders simply do not have the capacity to provide the care people need when in crisis. Like all providers, LifeBridge has seen an increase in behavioral health needs during the pandemic, but the problem predates the pandemic. This steady increase drove a redesign of our Emergency Room to provide more capacity for behavioral health patients. While this additional capacity will enhance care for these patients, it does not guarantee the type of response individuals need when in crisis. Hospital emergency rooms are not optimal sites for addressing the needs of people experiencing suicidal or other behavioral health crisis, as hospitals must also triage life-threatening medical emergencies, resulting in delays of hours or even days for behavioral crisis patients.

LifeBridge and our hospital partners are committed to supporting crisis services through regional catalyst programs like the Greater Baltimore Regional Integrated Crisis System (GBRICS). Strengthening our local network of crisis call centers through a fully funded 988 Trust Fund will help ensure these system enhancements are successful.

For all the above stated reasons, we request a **FAVORABLE** report for SB3.

Contact: Martha D. Nathanson, Esq.
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Development
mnathans@lifebridgehealth.org
Mobile: 443-286-4812

SB 3 988 Trust Fund - Funding_ Mary Kavanagh_Jan 1

Uploaded by: Mary Kavanagh

Position: FAV

January 19, 2023

**Senate Budget & Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding

Mary Kavanagh is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland’s transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland’s Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Why do the people of Maryland need this? Because where do they go when a psychiatrist can’t see them for three weeks? Those not in crisis may go to work, school, or wherever they need to go as they wait. My brother, Tim, however, could not wait. He went, instead, to a car and shot himself in the head. We found the appointment date written on a notepad in his apartment.

Tim had wanted help, but that help proved too late. Help does not have to be too late for others now, who, like Tim, don’t want to die but who just want to silence the anxiety and angst and hopelessness that wear at their souls. And it does not need to be too late for their families, friends and colleagues who might otherwise bear the burden of the eternal “What if?”

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. **Mary Kavanagh, in the name of her brother Timothy Kavanagh who died by suicide on September 24, 2021, urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.**

1b - SB 3 - B&T - HSCRC - LOS.pdf

Uploaded by: Maryland State of

Position: FAV

January 19, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 3 – 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) requests that the Committee favorably report Senate Bill 3, the 9–8–8 Trust Fund. HSCRC, through the hospital rate-setting system, has invested \$79.1 million seed funding over five years to develop sustainable, evidence-based crisis services in Maryland through the HSCRC's Regional Partnership Catalyst Program. A high functioning 988 system is crucial to support these investments. 988 functions as a gateway, connecting individuals in crisis to the resources developed by the Regional Partnerships, including mobile crisis teams, crisis stabilization centers, and same-day referrals to behavioral health providers. Without a well-funded 988 system, the Regional Partnerships would not reach as many patients, reducing the impact of the money that hospitals and health care payers have invested in the Regional Partnerships.

The Regional Partnership Catalyst Program provides funding to hospital-led projects that work across statewide geographic regions to build infrastructure for interventions that align with goals of the Total Cost of Care (TCOC) Model and support population health goals in the Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS). One of the three population health priority focus areas in SIHIS is opioid overdose mortality. Opioid use is directly connected to broader behavioral health issues, as many people who use opioids also have other behavioral health concerns. To support this SIHIS goal, HSCRC used the Regional Partnership Catalyst Program to support the implementation and expansion of the evidence-based "CrisisNow" behavioral health crisis management model in Maryland.¹ Funding recipients are implementing and expanding at least one of the three main elements of the CrisisNow Model:

1. Crisis call centers and "Air Traffic Control" services, which help connect individuals in crisis to needed services;
2. Community-based mobile crisis teams, and
3. Short-term, "sub-acute" residential stabilization programs.

¹ The CrisisNow Model is described in "Crisis Now: Transforming Services is Within Our Reach" action plan developed by the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention.

Adam Kane, Esq
Chairman

Joseph Antos, PhD
Vice-Chairman

Victoria W. Bayless

Stacia Cohen, RN, MBA

James N. Elliott, MD

Maulik Joshi, DrPH

Sam Malhotra

Katie Wunderlich
Executive Director

Allan Pack
Director
Population-Based Methodologies

Gerard J. Schmith
Director
Revenue & Regulation Compliance

William Henderson
Director
Medical Economics & Data Analytics

Through a competitive process, HSCRC awarded funds to three regional partnerships. A core goal of the Regional Partnership Catalyst Program is to foster widespread collaboration between hospitals and community partners. Under this program, hospitals are partnering with neighboring hospitals and diverse community organizations including local health departments (LHDs), local behavioral health authorities (LBHAs), provider organizations, and non-profits to expand behavioral health crisis services infrastructure. In 2021, Regional Partnerships worked with a total of 136 community partners to expand crisis services.

Table: Regional Partnership (Behavioral Health) Jurisdictions and Funding Amounts

Regional Partnership	Jurisdiction	5 Year Funding Amount (2021-2025)
Greater Baltimore Regional Integrated Crisis System (G-BRICS)	Baltimore City/County, Howard, Carroll Counties	\$44,862,000
Totally Linking Care (TLC)	Prince George's County	\$22,889,722
Tri-County Behavioral Health Engagement (TRIBE)	Lower Eastern Shore	\$11,316,332

The second funded year of these programs has just ended. In the first year (2021) Regional Partnerships prioritized putting business agreements in place, finalizing memorandums of understanding, and procuring contracts necessary for implementing activities in CY 2022. TRIBE focused on preparing to open two crisis stabilization centers. Both of these centers opened in 2022 and are serving individuals in crisis on the lower eastern shore. G-BRICS and TLC focused efforts on procuring software to implement "air traffic control" systems and expanding mobile crisis teams in their service area in CY 2022. GBRICS has also continued to expand access to same-day care through its Open Access Pilot and TLC plans to open its stabilization center in Prince George's County this year.

The Commission urges a favorable report on SB 3 to fund vital 988 services throughout Maryland. If you have any questions or if we may provide you with any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at me at katie.wunderlich@maryland.gov or Megan Renfrew, Associate Director of External Affairs, at 410-382-3855 or megan.renfrew1@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,



Katie Wunderlich
Executive Director

OOOMD-2023-SB 3-FAV-988 Trust Fund.pdf

Uploaded by: Michelle Livshin

Position: FAV



ON OUR OWN
OF MARYLAND

onourownmd.org

7310 Esquire Court
Mailbox 14
Elkridge, MD 21075

410.540.9020

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3: 988 Trust Fund - Funding

Thank you Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and committee members for improving the quality and accessibility of healthcare services for Marylanders. On Our Own of Maryland (OOOMD) is a statewide behavioral health (BH) education and advocacy organization, operating for 30 years by and for people with lived experience of mental health and substance use challenges. Our network of 20+ affiliated peer-operated Wellness & Recovery Centers throughout the state offer free, voluntary recovery support services to nearly 6,500 community members with mental health and substance use challenges.

We strongly support Senate Bill 3, which provides necessary funding to make the national 988 hotline and associated services the more effective, less traumatizing alternative to dialing 911 for behavioral health crises.

Delivering crisis response services in a timely and trauma-informed manner requires adequate resources to maintain strong infrastructure. This bill provides necessary funding for 988-responsive services to maintain staffing levels, training standards, and functional technology for real-time coordination and effective intervention.

988 creates opportunities to resolve BH crisis situations through voluntary, supportive, and cost-effective options such as phone counseling, mobile response teams, and walk-in clinics. However, 988 call centers cannot offer or connect individuals in distress with community services that don't exist or aren't available 24/7 due to a lack of stable or adequate funding. This bill bolsters both the 988 call centers as well as a continuum of crisis support services: Mobile Crisis Teams, Crisis Stabilization Centers, and other acute behavioral healthcare services.

Dedicating funding to support these community-based services decreases reliance on law enforcement as the default available responder for BH crisis scenarios, with important immediate and long-term positive impact for individuals and families. Too often, we hear people report frightening, unhelpful, and stigmatizing experiences due to non-specialty emergency responders' lack of understanding or skill. These bad experiences not only hurt or harm in the moment, but they create lasting mistrust and resistance to engaging with crisis services in the future.

On Our Own of Maryland strongly urges you to support SB 3's critical investment in our crisis response system, to make sure all Marylanders receive quality, effective, respectful, and real-time support when seeking help in their most vulnerable and difficult times. Thank you.

MD Catholic Conference_FAV_SB0003.pdf

Uploaded by: MJ Kraska

Position: FAV



January 19, 2023

SB 03

9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch) dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

Senate Bill 03 will require the Governor to include in the fiscal 2025 annual budget bill an appropriation of \$12.0 million to the 9-8-8 Trust Fund.

Behavioral health issues, including depression and suicide, are public health challenges that cause immeasurable pain among individuals, families, and communities across the country. This is an urgent issue that the Maryland General Assembly and citizens of Maryland must address. Senate Bill 03 is a crucial step for Maryland to meet the needs of individuals facing a serious behavioral health crisis.

Those experiencing mental illness are among the most marginalized and underserved in our society. The Catholic Church through its parishes, charities and other ministries reaches out pastorally to those struggling with mental illness. Because the Catholic faith embraces an integrated view of the human person as both corporeal and spiritual, we welcome the sciences as one pathway to knowledge of the human person. Pope St. John Paul II said *"Whoever suffers from mental illness always bears God's image and likeness in themselves, as does every human being. In addition, they always have the inalienable right not only to be considered as an image of God and therefore as a person, but also to be treated as such."*

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 03.

NCADD-MD - 2023 SB 3 FAV - 988 Funding.pdf

Uploaded by: Nancy Rosen-Cohen

Position: FAV



Senate Finance Committee

January 19, 2023

Senate Bill 3

9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding

Support

NCADD-Maryland supports support Senate Bill 3 – 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill requires the Governor to include in the budget bill for fiscal year 2025 an appropriation of \$12,000,000 to the 988 Trust Fund established by the legislature last year.

The new Lifeline 988 Lifeline went into effect last July and existing funding has already helped Lifeline providers around the state hire new staff and respond to a 20% increase in call volume. It is expected that calls will significantly increase as word about the Lifeline continues to spread. Maryland must ensure that its eight regional call centers are adequately resourced to support an increase of calls for help.

The state will also need to build out other related crisis response services such as crisis stabilization centers and mobile response teams that go into the community in order to support 988 callers who need a higher level of care. Senate Bill 3 will ensure funding will be available.

We urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 3.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.

SB003-BT-FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

SB 3

January 19, 2023

TO: Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee
FROM: Nina Themelis, Interim Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 0003 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

POSITION: Support

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 3.

SB 3 establishes a mandated appropriation for FY 2025 of \$12.0 million to the 9-8-8 Trust Fund. Diversion from 9-1-1 and access to expanded 9-8-8 services are vital, and the BCA supports dedicated and expanded funding for this service.

In 2022, The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) designated 9-8-8 as the State's behavioral health crisis hotline. The maintenance of 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for a suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline, and the coordination and delivery of the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services in the State, is vital to ensuring that those experiencing behavioral health crises receive the help that they need. Diversion from 9-1-1 and access to 9-8-8 services provides crucial resources for de-escalating and resolving crises.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 3.

MPA Testimony 2023 - Support SB 3 - 9-8-8 Trust

Uploaded by: Pat Savage

Position: FAV



10480 Little Patuxent Parkway, Ste 910, Columbia, MD 21044. Office 410-992-4258. Fax: [410-992-7732](tel:410-992-7732). www.marylandpsychology.org

January 19, 2023

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

President

Rebecca Resnick, PsyD,

President-elect

Brian Corrado, PsyD

Past President

Linda McGhee, PhD, JD

Secretary

Tanya Morrel, PhD

Treasurer

Melinda Capaldi, PsyD

Representatives-at-large

Jessica Rothstein, PsyD

Andrea Chisolm, Ph.D.

Representative to APA Council

Peter Smith, PsyD

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Communications

Robyn Waxman, PhD

Diversity

Whitney Hobson, PsyD

Early Career Psychologist

Meghan Mattos, PsyD

Educational Affairs

Laurie Friedman Donze, PhD

Ethics

Colleen Byrne, PhD

Legislative

Pat Savage, PhD

Membership

Linda Herbert, PhD

Professional Practice

Karin Cleary, PhD

PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS

OFFICER

Paul C. Berman, PhD

INTERIM EXECUTIVE

DIRECTOR

Thomas Cote, MBA, CAE

Senator Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **Senate Bill 3 – “9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding”**

Position: **SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral level psychologists throughout the state, asks the **Budget & Taxation Committee to favorably report on Senate Bill 3.**

The Maryland Psychological Association asks that the committee vote in favor of adequately funding this crisis hotline and the associated funding for the coordination and delivery of crises services for those experiencing behavioral health issues. We strongly support the establishment of a set aside fund as these mental health services have been sorely underfunded in the past.

Hotlines often serve as a frontline resource for people experiencing suicidality and other mental health crises. Not only do they work to lessen the immediacy of one's crisis, but hotlines often serve as entry points into the world of mental health services, by providing those in crisis with resources they might not otherwise have thought to access. During this time of increased awareness of mental health needs, the establishment of this trust fund to ensure the existence of a statewide hotline seems to be a prudent move.

The MPA, therefore urges you to favorably report on SB 3 to ensure adequate funding for this crisis hotline.

Thank you for considering our comments on SB 78. If we can be of any further assistance as the Senate – Budget and Taxation Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Pat Savage at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.
President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs

988 Written testimony 1.19.23.pdf

Uploaded by: Quinita Garrett

Position: FAV



January 19, 2023

**Senate Budget & Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding

Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. (BCRI) provides 24-hour access to call center services. Since 1992 BCRI has provided mental health and substance use services for individuals regardless of their ability to pay. The mission is to provide timely and effective community based services in the least restrictive environment. All services are initiated through our 24/7 988 call center. Individuals can call to receive emotional support, resources, and referrals.

Quinita Garrett, Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding.

This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Since 2007, BCRI has been an active Lifeline center and strongly believes in 988's goal to provide free confidential emotional support 24 hours a day across the United States. Baltimore Crisis Response Inc. received 4,589 calls on the local lifeline from January 2021 to December 2021 from residents of Baltimore city seeking support. Lifeline has played an integral part in the lives of residents around the world. The SB 3 988 Trust bill-funding is vital to maintain a robust and trained workforce that are instrumental to promoting community wellness and support.

Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. Quinita Garrett, Baltimore Crisis response, Inc. **urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.**

Quinita Garrett

SB0003_CC_Vaughan_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Regan Vaughan

Position: FAV

SB 3
9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
January 19, 2023
Support

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB 3 which would require the Governor to include funding in the fiscal 2025 budget for the 9-8-8 Trust Fund.

Inspired by the Gospel to love, serve and teach, Catholic Charities provides care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. For 100 years, Catholic Charities has accompanied Marylanders as they age with dignity, obtain empowering careers, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve economic independence, prepare for educational success and feel welcome as immigrant neighbors. We recognize the need for crisis behavioral health services in our communities.

Crisis call centers are often the first interaction that people have with the local mental health system. It is critical that it be fully funded and sustainable to connect individuals and families who call with the immediate assistance that they need. They serve as safe places where people seeking support can call 24/7, regardless of their ability to pay for the service or their enrollment in specific programs. They make critical connections for individuals and families to local mental health providers to provide assessments and ongoing services to try and mitigate the need for a law enforcement response.

We have seen the benefit of having a call center through Baltimore City's Health Crisis Hotline which among other duties triages calls for our BCARS program, a crisis program for children and adolescents in Baltimore City. By operating in this way there is an immediate referral for youth and families so that they are not either stuck in the emergency room seeking services outside of the scope of what the hospitals provide or languishing on a wait list for an opening at a local Outpatient Mental Health Clinic (OMHC).

While this hotline served an important service for the local area, Maryland is aligning with national efforts to improve access to crisis care by designating 988 as the number for the entire state and ensure adequate funding to support local crisis call centers. We must continue to invest in 988 to ensure the system has the capacity to serve all Marylanders.

For the reasons listed above, Catholic Charities of Baltimore appreciates your consideration, and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB3.

Submitted By: Regan Vaughan, Director of Advocacy

SB 3 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Phillips

Position: FAV

MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

REPRESENTING THE VOLUNTEER FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMS PERSONNEL OF MARYLAND.



Robert P. Phillips

Chairman

Legislative Committee

17 State Circle

Annapolis, MD 21401

email: rfcchief48@gmail.com

cell: 443-205-5030

Office: 410-974-2222

SB 3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

My name is Robert Phillips and I am the Legislative Committee Chairman for the Maryland State FireFighters Association (MSFA).

I wish to present testimony in favor of **Senate Bill 3: 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding**

This legislation requires the Governor to provide funding for the reimbursement for costs associated with maintaining 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline.

The fire service has recognized mental health decline as a major issue negatively impacting our members. The incidence of suicide has impacted all walks of life and the public safety service especially. The passing of this bill would provide the funds to make a universal phone number available to anyone experiencing a mental health crisis where they would be able to get help quickly.

I thank the committee for their time and attention to this important bill and ask that you vote favorable on Senate Bill 3.

My contact information is listed above and welcome any further inquiries you might have.

SSJC Support SB3 988 Trust Fund.pdf

Uploaded by: Robin Yasinow

Position: FAV



January 19, 2023

**Senate Budget & Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

SB 3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding

Silver Spring Justice Coalition is a coalition of faith groups, advocacy organizations, families of impacted individuals, and community members in Montgomery County, Maryland. SSJC was formed in 2018, after a police officer killed Robert White, a Black man living with mental illness who was taking his daily walk in the park and looked suspicious to the police officer. Our mission is to reduce the presence of police in our communities; eliminate violence and harm by police; establish transparency and accountability; and redirect public funds toward community needs.

Silver Spring Justice Coalition is pleased to support SB 3 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network have been providing free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades. **The increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment.** Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever, and investing in the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

Maryland's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is essential to reducing the need for law enforcement to respond when someone is experiencing a mental health crisis.

988 can help prevent traumatic and sometimes deadly interactions with police and reduce the risk that people in crisis will be criminalized. Overreliance on law enforcement in crisis response has led to inequitable access to care, disproportionate arrest, and incarceration for people of color. 988 is an important part of ending this cycle.

Maryland has a strong foundation upon which to build a robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. Silver Spring Justice Coalition urges the Senate Budget & Tax Committee to pass SB 3.

2023 LCPCM SB 3 Senate Side FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 3

Title: 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Hearing Date: January 19, 2023

Position: Favorable

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 3 – 988 Trust Fund - Funding*. This bill requires \$12 million in state funding for fiscal 2025.

During the 2022 session, LCPCM was a strong supporter of HB 293 which established the 988 Trust Fund, allowing the program to lay the groundwork for its infrastructure in fiscal 2024. When fully implemented, the 9-8-8 system will allow Marylanders to access crisis services by using an easy-to-remember three-digit number. This system will reduce the burden on the 9-1-1 system and will also more quickly connect people to crisis services instead of more generalized emergency services. In order for the 9-8-8 system to be effective, there will need to be an ongoing commitment to supporting crisis services in the state. With this year's legislation, the 988 system will take another important step forward in developing a robust crisis response system in the state. This trust fund will also help facilitate the state receiving federal funds to support 9-8-8 implementation.

We urge a favorable report on this legislation in order to help modernize our state's emergency petition process. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

2023 MCHS SB 3 Senate Side FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Maryland Community Health System

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 3 - 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Hearing Date: January 19, 2023

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Community Health System (MCHS) supports *Senate Bill 3 – 988 Trust Fund - Funding*. This bill requires \$12 million in state funding for the 988 Trust Fund fiscal 2025.

MCHS is a network of federally qualified health centers focused on providing somatic, behavioral, and oral health care services to underserved communities. Many of our patients are Medicaid enrollees. In a report just released this month, the Kaiser Family Foundation estimated that 39% of Medicaid enrollees face behavioral health issues.ⁱ It has always been difficult for people to identify behavioral health resources; and with the recent health care professional shortage crisis, access to care has become more complicated to navigate.

We support this legislation because Maryland consumers need the support of the 988 Program to find services in their community. If we ensure that the program has sufficient resources, we can help Marylanders manage their behavioral health needs and avoid crisis situations.

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

ⁱ https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/a-look-at-strategies-to-address-behavioral-health-workforce-shortages-findings-from-a-survey-of-state-medicaid-programs/?utm_campaign=KFF-2023-Medicaid&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=241088401&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9C3OXFb9do6iUSNn8DgzRQAHHfc8GZmdLgWLJvQrn2ogX89PruDfKoraOXDS_cR8xpDMDAC8YDBuczpLsvZao1Ucb3wQ

2023 MOTA SB 3 Senate Side FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ www.mota-members.com

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 3

Title: 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Hearing Date: January 19, 2023

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports *Senate Bill 3 – 988 Trust Fund - Funding*. This bill will provide \$12 million in state funding to the 988 Program for fiscal 2025. MOTA supported HB 293 which created the 988 Trust Fund in 2022. We support the continued investment under this year’s bill to ensure the program is functional and effective. Maryland is facing one of the most significant health professional shortages in our lifetimes. As part of the continuum of behavioral health providers, occupational therapy practitioners support programs, such as the 988 Program, that help consumers find the services they need to navigate or avoid behavioral health crises. If we can provide any additional information, please feel free to contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

2023 MSCA SB 3 Senate Side FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 3

Title: 9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

Hearing Date: January 19, 2023

Position: Favorable

The Maryland School Counselor Association supports *Senate Bill 3 – 988 Trust Fund - Funding*. This bill requires \$12 million in state funding for the 988 Program in fiscal 2025. We represent school counselors who support the health and wellbeing of all children in elementary, middle, and high schools in Maryland public schools.

The 988 Program is part of a comprehensive strategy to ensure families and children can access behavioral health services in a crisis or to prevent a crisis. Individuals can call 988 at any time during the day, including after hours, to connect to behavioral health services and other support programs in their area. Maryland needs this service now more than ever. In the 2022 Databook, the Annie E. Casey Foundation reported that the number of youth experiencing anxiety and depression jumped from 9.4% to 12.8% between 2016 and 2022.

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. It will help ensure that the 988 Program has the infrastructure support to make it successful. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

SB3 988 Trust Fund.pdf

Uploaded by: Sara Agresti

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB3

9-8-8 Trust Fund - Funding

January 17, 2023

Senator Guy Guzzone
Miller Senate Office Building
3 West
Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony of Marian House in Support of SB3

Dear Senator Guy Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

Marian House is a holistic, healing community for women and their children who are in need of housing and support services. Marian House provides comprehensive support services to assist women with experiences of trauma, including poverty, substance abuse, and chronic mental health issues. **I write to urge you to support Senate Bill 3 – 9-8-8 Trust Fund – Funding.**

Over forty years ago, Marian House was opened to provide reentry supports for women leaving incarceration as Sisters and laywomen recognized that lack of support contributed to recidivism rates. Today, we have also expanded to serve women with histories of trauma including homelessness, incarceration, neglect, substance abuse and mental health needs. Since our opening, we have assisted women in reinventing and rebuilding themselves through services such as: counseling, substance abuse treatment, job training and providing both long and short-term housing. All the women we have served have overcome obstacles on their journeys to become contributing members of society in the Baltimore area.

In FY22 Marian House served sixty-six women in our transitional housing program. Of those sixty-six, 86% had a chronic mental illness and 83% had a substance abuse disorder. The 9-8-8 initiative for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline is crucial to supporting Marylanders like our clients who are in need of mental health support services. By allotting \$12 million to the 9-8-8 Trust Fund, the services that are run under the initiative will be able function to their greatest ability and provide exceptional service to vulnerable populations in their time of need.

By supporting SB 3, Maryland's most vulnerable populations will have greater access to these support services that have the funding they need to function. On behalf of the women we serve at Marian House, I respectfully urge you to take the call to action in **SUPPORT of SB3.**

Thank you for your support,

Katie Allston, LCSW-C
President and C.E.O.

2023_SB 3_988 Trust Fund-Funding_FAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Shannon Aleshire

Position: FAV



January 19, 2023

Senate Budget and Tax Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT
SB3—9-8-8 Trust Fund

Mental Health Association (MHA) of Frederick County, a private non-profit in Frederick County, is a primary provider of crisis services in our county. The work of our organization is to support the emotional wellness in our community through preparing resilient children, securing vulnerable families, and standing with those in crisis. MHA of Frederick County is the home of the 988 call center for Western Maryland. We have answered the National Suicide line since 2001.

Mental Health Association of Frederick is pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands additional state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and emotional support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

As a provider of this service, we know adequate funding is crucial. We received a \$7,500 annual stipend from the National Suicide Lifeline to provide 24/7 availability for persons in crisis and with thoughts of suicide. The call centers are the foundation of the crisis system structure and provide access to well-trained staff. 90% of calls are handled without additional intervention from more expensive services such as law enforcement or hospital admission. Funding of centers that attracts a quality workforce and highlights the life-saving work that occurs every day is critical.

Maryland has the unique opportunity to align with national efforts to improve access to crisis care by designating 988 as the number for our state's behavioral health crisis hotline and ensuring adequate funding to support local crisis call centers. **Mental Health Association of Frederick County urges the Senate Budget and Tax Committee to pass SB 3.**

Thank you for your consideration,

Shannon Aleshire, CEO
Mental Health Association of Frederick County

SB3 Testimony OGEE 1.0.pdf

Uploaded by: Sheena Ogee

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 3

9-8-8 Trust Fund--Funding

Before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

By Sheena Ogee, MSW Fellow, Maryland Health Care For All! Coalition

January 19, 2023

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 3. We especially thank Senator Augustine for being the lead sponsor for the bill.

We are pleased to support SB 3 988 Trust Fund – Funding. Our mission is to ensure that all Marylanders have access to quality affordable health care coverage. This bill provides much needed additional funding for the 988 Trust Fund to support reliable planning and capacity building for the Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline network.

Last year, Maryland established the 988 Trust Fund and dedicated funding for 988 Lifeline providers for essentially the first time. This funding was critical to support Maryland's transition to 988, the first nationwide three-digit access code for suicidal and behavioral health crisis calls and texts. The helplines that make up Maryland's Lifeline network provide free, 24/7 supportive counseling and safety planning to residents for decades, and the increased call volume and visibility associated with the transition to 988 demands new and continued state investment. Maryland communities need mental health and support more than ever and investing in the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is a critical way to provide that support.

I am a University of Maryland Master of Social Work student who interned with Maryland 211 during the peak of the pandemic. This unique opportunity gave me first-hand experience acknowledging and working to support the behavioral health needs facing Maryland's most vulnerable residents. As a young adult and mother of three small children, I profoundly understand that our current social climate is one of intensifying anxiety and limited behavioral health supports, especially for our young people. Maryland has a strong foundation that can be built upon to create the robust 988 network that will keep residents safe and well, but continued investment is needed. Thanks to your leadership, Maryland has one of the top five health care systems in the entire nation, and SB 3 will help us continue to lead. **I urge the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee to pass SB 3.**

Blank 2.pdf

Uploaded by: Timothy Jansen

Position: FAV

Good morning - My name is Tim Jansen I am the Chief Executive Officer of Community Crisis Services in Hyattsville, Maryland. I come to you today in support of Senate Bill three funding the 988 suicide and crisis line bill. My organization has been providing 988 services for the last 52 years – 988 began a little over 20 years ago as the National Hopeline Network. It became national suicide prevention lifeline in early 2005. The movement to three digit dialing from 10 digit dialing as you well know happened last year in July 2022.

Calling 988 is often the first entry an individual has into the mental health system. This can be frightening, overwhelming, and strange. Facing one's mental health struggles or thoughtful suicide is not easy – there is a lot of stigma surrounding mental health and suicide. 988 provides an anonymous opportunity for individuals to seek care, to speak with an informed, counselor, And take the first steps towards safety and wellness.

This resource is available 24 hours every day, 365 days every year. It is imperative that individuals have the opportunity to get care during their time of crisis. Often times, in fact about 90% of the time, the interaction is completed in a phone call. That phone call may just be helping someone to safety plan, to receive a referral for ongoing care, or to just simply work through the difficulties an individual may be facing. If more is needed nine in and counselors are uniquely positioned to connect callers and chatters to urgent care appointments, mobile response teams, and emergency personnel if needed.

In order to ensure ongoing care, the 988 Network needs to ensure that it has resources to provide this life-saving service. That includes ensuring a counselor is available at all times with little to no wait time, it includes ensuring that everyone answering the phone as proper training, it includes ensuring that there is a quality assurance process that shows that we are Following best practices, and it includes ensuring the counselors answering 988 have access to appropriate supervision and self-care.

Three years ago, I lost my mother to suicide. My wonderful 76-year-old mother didn't believe in mental health services. She was brought up in a time when it wasn't talked about – when it was hidden behind closed doors. Even with her son running one of the largest crisis hotline's in the country, she wouldn't reach out. I want to work to ensure that no one else's mom feels that way. I want to make sure that we make 988 is easy to call as it is to call 411 for information or 911 in emergency. No one should succumb to suicide because of the stigma surrounding mental health.

I I heard she does support Senate Bill three to ensure that the 988 network is funded properly so that there are fewer and fewer losses to suicide. Thank you for the opportunity to share this with you.

X-itcare strategies have demonstrated effectiveness

Uploaded by: Tina Parkman

Position: FAV

Re: SB3 -9-8-8 Trust fund Bill

To whom it may concern,

Our approach is collaboration. X-Itcare strategies have demonstrated effectiveness in crisis by utilizing 988 crisis services as a back-up that has saved many lives.

X-Itcare Specializes in crisis services ie; an online- life-line to help those who are experiencing substance use or mental health crisis and those who are experiencing emotional distress.

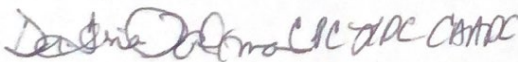
Our X-Itcare crisis staff supports consumers with 1-on-1 ie; crisis counseling, mobile recovery teams, peer specialists, emergency room recovery coaches, veterans advocates and Licensed clinicians during a mental health crisis and utilizing 988 for services to build crisis services. They are 1st responders that have utilized and shared resources that birthed out the New X-Itcare advocates which including recovery supports, text line supports, via text messaging case management, referrals: prevention and intervention services where we measured zero recidivism for x offenders on parole and 89% recovery standards in special populations ie; Veterans and Reentry and at-risk youth in residential settings. We support 988 SB3 9-8-8- Trust fund bill, they have helped agencies that are interested in creating or adjusting crisis services in their communities without having to involve the police? In addition, those who have co-occurring disorders; both mental health and substance -use disorders, visits in the ER Emergency room and discharged without receiving a higher level of care.

X-Itcare are person centered for people who are in crisis ie; suicidal or homicidal through intervention services provide supports. In addition, our 1-on1 app locate individuals through our gift 2 lift card program, make our daily rounds and mobile start-up programs in the community starting to build crisis services for our communities.

988 supports Collaborative approaches to Responding to Behavioral Health Emergencies that reviews best practices for law enforcement responding to mental health crises, strategies for collaboration, policy considerations, and more.

X-Itcare Crisis Response online- lifeline will continue to Connect Callers with Mental Health Professionals if approved and we are in favor of the SB3 -9-8-8 Trust fund Bill. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 855-948-1661-1-on-1 website xitwithdrtin.com

Kind Regards,



Dr.Tina Parkman CPC LPC,CAADC

X-ITCARE LLC/Director

SB0003_Unfavorable_SvetlanaShargorodskaya_2022_01_

Uploaded by: Svetlana Shargorodskaya

Position: UNF

SB0003, Unfavorable, Svetlana Shargorodskaya, January 18, 2022

Currently, people call 988 expecting confidentiality and privacy. Some callers are surprised when cops break down the door, handcuff them, and haul them off to involuntary psychiatric hospitalization.

988 refers less than two percent of calls to 911. However, because of the huge call volume, that means hundreds of thousands of nonconsensual interventions. Some researchers believe that this humiliating and disempowering experience causes trauma that actually increases the person's chance of committing suicide later on.

What's the alternative? It's crisis lines such as BlackLine, Trans Lifeline, and Samaritans, who have a policy of zero nonconsensual intervention, never forwarding the call to 911.

Fordham University suicidology professor Emily Krebs says, QUOTE While this approach may indeed result in some callers' deaths, I believe that it will allow many more people to call without fear—and will ultimately save more lives while honoring people's autonomy. UNQUOTE

Some people are especially unsafe in an encounter with the authorities, being a trans person, queer person, person of color, undocumented immigrant, or disabled person. But no matter who you are, when you feel blue and want someone to talk to, you don't want to risk getting locked up.

Journalist Rob Wipond reports that the government contractor administering 988, an organization called Vibrant, demands that its participating call centers covertly trace many calls. Vibrant's guidelines, revised on December 27, 2022, state that dispatching emergency services is always an option for the call center workers. Furthermore, Vibrant has made clear its desire to prevent all other crisis lines from receiving calls or related state funding—endangering the survival of any community-based crisis lines that are truly confidential.

Instead of more funding for the coercive framework of 988, please allocate this money to crisis lines that respect the callers' privacy and ultimately help more people survive their emotional crisis.

1a - SB 3 - B&T - MDH - LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: INFO



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

January 19, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 3 – 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding – Letter of Information

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 3 – 9–8–8 Trust Fund – Funding. The 9–8–8 Trust Fund (Fund) is a non-lapsing fund, established in 2022, to provide funds for the reimbursement of costs associated with designating and maintaining 988 as the universal number for the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. The Fund also supports the development and implementation of a statewide initiative for the coordination and delivery of the continuum of behavioral health crisis response services.

Maryland successfully launched the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline on July 18, 2022 using funds from the Federal Government. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline offers free, confidential, 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. The goal of 988 is to provide immediate crisis intervention and support. According to the most recent data from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), in November 2022 the 988 Lifeline routed 402,798 contacts.¹

SB 3 requires the Governor to include in the annual budget bill for fiscal year 2025 an appropriation of \$12,000,000 to the Fund. MDH respectfully recommends that the mandated appropriation language be removed. Please see the attached proposed funding sources (page 4). We will continue to work with SAMHSA, other federal agencies, and other stakeholders to identify additional sources of funding.

If the Committee does decide to move forward with this legislation, MDH respectfully recommends that the Committee confer with the appropriate budget committee and the Department of Budget and Management for further discussion as part of the budget process.

¹ 988 Lifeline Performance Metrics, November 2022 <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988/performance-metrics>

If you have any questions, please contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs, at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura Herrera Scott', is positioned above the printed name.

Laura Herrera Scott, MD, MPH
Secretary



988 in Maryland

July 2022

Maryland 988 Strategic Plan Implementation

Upcoming Key Implementation Dates SAMHSA Grant	
June 2022	Finalize data reporting (KPI) with 988 Call Centers Submit Behavioral Disparity Impact Statement to SAMHSA Submit Quality Improvement Plan to SAMHSA Have First Conversations about 988 and 911 Coordination
July 2022	Review Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Report Execute on next steps to move 911 and 988 coordination conversation forward Continue messaging to various groups reminding of the change 1-800 # to 988 # July 16, 2022 - 988 LAUNCHES NATIONWIDE July 30, 2022 - Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Annual Goals Due SAMHSA Grant 988 Public Awareness Starts
September 2022	Submit 988 chats and texts coverage plan to SAMHSA Design and Implement Continuous Performance and QI Process
December 2022	Target Date for Maryland CONTACT ANSWER RATES 90%+
March 2023	March 30, 2023 - Submit Landscape Analysis of Center Response procedures March 30, 2023 - Submit Maryland 988 Sustainability Plan to SAMHSA

Integration of Crisis Response Services

The Maryland Crisis Model

- Somewhere to call (hotline)
- Someone to see a person in crisis (mobile crisis teams)
- Somewhere to go (crisis center/urgent care/safe station)

Currently being developed by Maryland Crisis System Workgroup

- Seeks to provide care coordination, navigation, and partnerships as a foundation of the system
- 988 will serve as a key component to the system's success
- Need to change narrative – instead of calling 911 for behavioral health crisis – educate public to call 988.

Care Coordination with 211 MD

- New project to provide support to hospital discharge planners seeking outpatient treatment for hard-to-place patients with behavioral health disorders
- 211 MD will provide phone and electronic communication between Hospital Emergency Departments, 211, and BHA Care Coordinators
- Electronic portal, data collection, and follow up are part of the project

Maryland 988 Funding Plan

988 Funding (Includes estimated cost savings in future years for 211 Press 1)

Funding Source	State Fiscal Year					Funding Source Totals
	SFY 22	SFY 23	SFY 24	SFY 25	SFY 26	
Estimated Savings: 211 MD, Inc. Annual Funding for 211 Press 1 (\$958,440 Annually)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 479,220.00	\$ 718,830.00	\$ 1,198,050.00
988 SAMHSA Grant (\$1,972,989 ends 4/29/2024)	\$ -	\$ 1,076,175.82	\$ 896,813.18	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,972,989.00
988 SAMHSA Supplemental Grant (\$1,000,000 ends 4/29/2024)	\$ -	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 800,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000.00
State General Funds (SFY 23 Only)	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000.00
State General Funds (SB241)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,500,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,500,000.00
988 APRA Funding	\$ 995,400.00	\$ 995,400.00	\$ 995,400.00	\$ 1,002,194.00	\$ -	\$ 3,988,394.00
SFY Totals 988 Specific Totals	\$ 995,400.00	\$ 7,271,575.82	\$ 8,192,213.18	\$ 1,481,414.00	\$ 718,830.00	\$ 18,659,433.00

988 in Maryland

988 Public Awareness Plan

Strategic Plan Communications to Community Partners

Presentations

- MDH staff have already presented to multiple groups, including local jurisdictions, about Maryland's 988 implementation planning.
- We have provided formal presentations to the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention, Health Officers Roundtable, Maryland Association of Behavioral Health Authorities, Cecil County Mental Health Advisory Council, Anne Arundel and Baltimore County Local Behavioral Health Authorities.
- We have additional 988 implementation presentations planned for the coming months.

Strategic Plan Communications to Community Partners (continued)

988 Fact Sheet and Webpages

- 988 Fact Sheet created and distributed to BHA masterlist, including:
 - NAMI
 - Maryland Hospital Association
 - Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland
 - Mental Health Association of Maryland
 - MedChi
 - NCADD
 - Maryland Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
 - Opioid Operational Command Center (OOCC)
 - and other providers
- [Webpage drafted](#) for BHA and the OOCC's BeforeIt'sTooLate websites

988 Public Awareness Plan

- SAMHSA has provided potential partners with a comprehensive toolkit:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988/partner-toolkit>



988 Public Awareness Timeline

July 2022:

- MDH press release announcing official launch of 988 in Maryland (July 18)
- Launch BHA and OOCC 988 webpages (July 16)
- Digital and audio promotion of new 988 services
 - Working with Hatcher Group to launch 8 week campaign (July 17—Sept. 16)
 - \$250,000 (part of 211 contract) for digital ad graphics, new radio spot and media buy
- Social media and website promotions from MDH, BHA, OOCC and others

988 Public Awareness Timeline (continued)

August — December 2022

- Distribute RFP or MOU/IA for multi-year awareness campaign
- Work with BHA partners to assess communication gaps; provide social media graphics for use by other state agencies, partners, stakeholders and advocacy groups
- Expand promotions through MDH social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and BHA's monthly partner and provider communications
- Replace helpline (211p1) with 988 on existing video and digital materials
 - See BHA's inventory of [all campaigns and promotional materials using 211 or 988 messages](#)

2023/24

- Launch video, audio, digital, transit/billboard campaign targeting all audiences through multiple media platforms
- [Office of Communications Messaging Overview](#)

988 Public Awareness — Materials



Coming soon: The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Maryland will soon have a new way to connect to a local behavioral health crisis call specialist. Calling 988 will connect callers directly to the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline which can provide assistance with substance use or mental health crises.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline replaces the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255).

All contacts with 988 (calls, chats, and texts) remain free of charge.

What does this mean for Marylanders?

When someone in Maryland calls 988, the call will be routed based on the caller's area code. For those calls routed to Maryland, the call will be answered by one of the eight strategically-located call centers. These centers provide phone-based support and information regarding local resources.

Maryland has been operating its own crisis hotline (call 211, press 1) which will remain in operation and accessible to Marylanders throughout the transition period and beyond.

When will 988 be implemented?

July 16, 2022 — 988 becomes operational across the nation.

Both 211 press 1 and the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will remain available. Those experiencing a behavioral health-related or suicidal crisis, or those looking to help a loved one through a crisis, should continue to call 211 and press 1 in Maryland or the Lifeline at its current number (1-800-273-8255) until July 16, 2022.

Who can call 988?

Anyone in need of assistance with behavioral health-related problems.

What can callers expect when they call 988?

Starting July 16, 2022, when calling 988: Callers will hear a greeting message while their call is routed to a Lifeline network crisis call center (based on the caller's area code)

- A trained crisis counselor will answer the phone, listen to the caller, understand how their problem is affecting them, provide support, and provide resources and interventions as needed
- If a Maryland crisis center is unable to take the call, the caller will be automatically routed to a national backup crisis center
- The Lifeline provides live crisis center phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 150 additional languages for people who call 988
- Veterans can access the Veterans Crisis Line by calling 988 and pressing 1

What can someone expect during a chat or text?

- Texts and chats to 988 will also be routed to a Lifeline network crisis call center based on area code.
- A response to chats and texts will be given by a call center staff person

[Learn more about the 988 National Suicide & Crisis Service Lifeline.](#)

988: The New Way to Connect to Behavioral Health Crisis Services



Starting July 16, 2022, Maryland will have a new way to connect to local behavioral health crisis services.

Calling 988 will connect callers directly to the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline which encompasses **all behavioral crisis services, to include all mental health and substance use (problems with drug and alcohol use).**

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline replaces the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline AND expands services to cover all behavioral health crisis services.

What does this mean for Marylanders?

When someone in Maryland calls 988, it will be routed to one of the state's **eight call centers**. These centers provide phone-based support and information regarding local resources. Marylanders can also text 988.

Maryland has been operating its own crisis hotline, **211 press 1**, and that number **will remain in operation and accessible to Marylanders throughout the transition period and beyond.**

Who can call 988?

Starting July 16, 2022, anyone in need of assistance with behavioral health related needs can call 988.

The new 988 feature is available nationwide for call (multiple languages), text or chat (English only). Both "211, press 1" and the existing Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will remain available throughout the transition period and beyond.



What can you expect when calling 988?

Starting July 16, 2022, when calling 988:

- Callers will hear a greeting message while their call is routed to the Maryland Lifeline network crisis center (based on the caller's area code)
- A trained call specialist will answer the phone, listen to the caller, understand how their problem is affecting them, provide support, and share resources if needed
- If the Maryland crisis center is unable to take the call, the caller will be automatically routed to a national backup crisis center
- The Lifeline provides live crisis center phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 150 additional languages for people who call 988

How does 988 help Marylanders?

988 call specialists located at crisis call centers around Maryland can immediately provide phone-based support and connections to local resources.

By directing cases to 988 when a behavioral health crisis (mental health and substance use) isn't life threatening, the response provided by public services, such as law enforcement and EMS, can be reserved for situations in which lives are endangered.

In 2020, Congress designated the new 988 calling code to be operated through the existing [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#). The [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#) sees 988 as a first step towards a transformed crisis care system in America.

SAMHSA's 988 Resources

- [988: FAQ](#)
- [Veterans Crisis Line Information](#)
- [Find 988 Open Jobs](#)
- [988 Partner Toolkit](#)

988 Webpage

Fact Sheet, page 1

988 Webpage



Fact Sheet, page 2

988 Public Awareness — Sample Graphics



988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

For mental health, drug and alcohol
use and suicide prevention support.

Call or text 988



For mental health, drug and alcohol
use and suicide prevention support.

Call or text 988

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

