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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