

January 26, 2023

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and other distinguished members of the committee,

My name is Paul Ellington, and I'm here representing Worcester County taking the position of favorable on this bill with some questions.

While it is our opinion that a statewide 3-1-1 system would be a benefit to Worcester County, and counties around the state, the main questions that we have around the duplication of efforts by county staff already doing similar work as would be implemented with the 3-1-1 system. While one of our initial concerns regarded the cost of this program and who would ultimately be responsible for that cost, it is now our understanding that should a county choose to opt in to this 3-1-1 program, costs would be covered by the state.

In regards to duplication of efforts for instance in Worcester County there is already a dedicated staff member(s) who are responsible for relaying and resolving non-emergency issues within the county. It is our concern that any reporting requirements mandated by the state could add confusion to already existing reporting done at both the county and the local levels.

One other question that we do have is regarding the county liaisons for this program. Would the state be covering the cost of those liaisons, would each liaison be required to have knowledge of and/or live in each respective county, and again, what would be the reporting requirements from each county to each respective liaison?

I look forward to continued discussion regarding this bill, and again, we are pleased to take the position of favorable pending the resolution of these questions.

Paul Ellington