



**Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland Department of Health – 2-1-1 Maryland - Oversight
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

February 14, 2023

Good afternoon, Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Kelly and members of this committee, my name is Quinton Askew, President/CEO of 211 Maryland. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on **behalf of House Bill 340. I would also like to thank Delegate Cullison for her continued commitment to 211 and leadership with this bill.**

For those who may not be familiar, 2-1-1 is Maryland's simple, easy to remember number for health and human services. 211 Maryland is the only health and human service system that is positioned with a statewide resource database to support effectively and efficiently those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

I am pleased to support HB 340, which adds clarifying language regarding the public/private relationship we have with our partners within the Maryland Department of Health and speaks to the new vision of the Maryland Information Network, a robust technology-forward nonprofit that administers the 211 System in Maryland.

Since COVID-19 more than 1.2 million connections to help have been made and more than 256,000 individuals are subscribed to our texting platforms that disseminates critical information from our various state partners such as MDEM, Dept. of Aging, Behavioral Health Administration, DHS, and others.

Almost twenty years ago in 2004 the concept of 2-1-1 was cultivated in this Committee and ultimately approved by the General Assembly. We look forward to building on the work that has been done and continuing to support the needs of Marylanders.

I would like to thank the General Assembly for recognizing the importance of the 2-1-1 system and ask for a FAVORABLE report for House Bill 340.

Thank You,
Quinton Askew
Quinton Askew
President/CEO, MIN