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UNITED STATES  
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February 6, 2023

Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
Chair, Health & Government Operations  
House Office Building, Room 241  
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk,

I write in support of Senate Bill 0030 and House Bill 0138 - Public Safety - 3-1-1 Systems - Non Emergency Information. Currently, many 9-1-1 call centers are frequently bombarded with non-emergency calls, taking manpower away from legitimate emergency calls which require the assistance of police, fire, or paramedics. This piece of legislation would be a vital first step to alleviating this burden on our emergency systems and would allow this valuable 3-1-1 tool to be accessible to all Marylanders.

The implementation of a state-wide 3-1-1 system would not only decrease the amount of non-emergency calls made to 9-1-1 call centers, but it would also serve as a critical portal for government information. This 3-1-1 system would be particularly beneficial to low-income Marylanders and those living in rural areas who lack broadband access, and as such may not have the tools necessary to find critical information for government services on their own.

As a Member of Congress, I take great pride in the constituent services my office provides, and I understand the tremendous importance of connecting individuals with the government services and programs they need. My office answers hundreds of requests from constituents every day who are requesting assistance in navigating the resources that our government has to offer. These requests range from the expected calls regarding Social Security and veterans benefits, to more general calls for information such as requests for pothole repairs, and the humane relocation of destructive wildlife. For this second category, it then falls to my staff to redirect to a local government resource, which can be frustrating for constituents to feel like it takes many calls and letters to get a simple problem solved.

They are a testament to the difficulties many Marylanders face in navigating government services themselves, which is why establishing a statewide 3-1-1 system to assist in this navigation is of utmost importance. While these services are already available in some of the more urban areas of the State, it is time to expand these benefits to all Marylanders, regardless of zip code.

I fully support Senate Bill 0030 and House Bill 0138 and urge the members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee to give this bill the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Trone", written in a cursive style.

David Trone  
Member of Congress