



February 7, 2024

**House Bill 353
Maryland Department of Health- 2-1-1 Maryland- Oversight
House Health & Government Operations Committee**

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, & Members of the Committee,

Position: Favorable

With our nearly 2,000 members, Maryland Nonprofits as the only association advocating for the 40,000 nonprofit organizations in Maryland, strongly supports House Bill 353. This bill helps promise transformative change in Maryland's healthcare landscape, and the potential to reshape the lives of nonprofit employers and every Maryland resident.

House Bill 353 aligns with 211's mission by providing awareness for all Marylander's that there is help in the event of a housing, food, mental, or behavioral health crisis. In addition, 211 has launched numerous community initiatives, and juvenile services like the Prison Rape Elimination Act, also known as PREA. This legislation seeks to create a more efficient and effective pathway to reduce confusion and unhealthy outcomes. House Bill 353 establishes a position to coordinate critical services for the public.

Over the past two years, the 211 Board and the organization has evolved to ensure the 211 system is in position to meet the needs of Marylanders and have the financial resources to support the demand for services. House Bill 353 will strengthen their relationship with the department support a path towards more sustainable funding and increase collaboration amongst other government offices. Our hope is to increase usage of the tools available with 211 and the Maryland Information Network to improve health outcomes and address social economic disparities in our State.

We would like to thank the General Assembly for recognizing the importance of 2-1-1 Maryland's work in the state and for the steps taken in the previous session to establish policies allowing the network to sustainably support all residents in Maryland.

It is for these reasons, that we politely ask for a FAVORABLE report on House Bill 353. Thank you.

