



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**SB 190 Law Enforcement Wellness Checks Requirements
(Gabriel's Law)**

Good Afternoon Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee.

Senate Bill 190 *Law Enforcement Wellness Checks Requirements* is legislation that would require a law enforcement agency that receives a “qualified request” for a wellness check to conduct the wellness check immediately.

The definition of the a “qualified request” is outlined in the legislation, which means a verbal or written request that includes sufficient information that has specific life-threatening concern that calls for an **immediate** response.

Currently in Maryland, we have 2-1-1, which is simple and memorable phone number for Marylanders to connect with essential resources throughout the state. It's a free and confidential service that enables individuals with unmet needs. This is a one-stop access point, so that our constituents do not have to navigate through the number of health and human service agency phone numbers, websites and community resources. Additionally, the federal government made the national suicide prevention number an easy 3-digit number in 2020, which is 9-8-8.

While, 2-1-1 and 9-8-8 have both been an amazing resources for our constituency... There are some cases in which there are **extreme** and **life-threatening** situations that call for an **IMMEDIATE** response from our public safety officers and this is what SB 190 intends to do.

Delegate Jamila Woods, who I cross-filed this legislation with, has a personal story, as it relates to her late son **Gabriel**, who died on the morning of **September 7, 2021**... because an immediate wellness check was **NOT** done, because it could not be verified.

Further, Gabriel lived in Richmond, Virginia and he had some health issues and when his mother did not hear from him, she called the Richmond police department to do an immediate wellness check. However, she was told that there was a requirement for the Prince George's County Police Department to contact the Richmond Police Department to verify the request... all this back and forth went on for hours and delayed an IMMEDIATE wellness check, which was necessary because of Gabriel's health issues, specifically with having seizures.

In closing, I can't help, but believe that Gabriel may have survived if there was an **immediate** wellness check done.

Lastly, I have one friendly amendment, I would like to ADD **“Gabriel's Law”** to the title of the bill, which will match the cross-file, HB 404. Therefore, I urge a favorable report for SB 190.