

## **HB 791 FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Darryl Webster

Position: FAV

## COMMISSIONERS FOR SOMERSET COUNTY

11916 SOMERSET AVENUE, ROOM 111  
PRINCESS ANNE, MARYLAND 21853  
TELEPHONE 410-651-0320, FAX 410-651-0366

### COMMISSIONERS

CHARLES LAIRD, PRESIDENT  
RANDY LAIRD, VICE-PRESIDENT  
CRAIG N. MATHIES, SR.  
ELDON WILLING  
DARRYL K. WEBSTER



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
RALPH D. TAYLOR

DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
ERNEST J. LEATHERBURY, JR.

COUNTY ATTORNEY  
KIRK G. SIMPKINS

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary  
Ways and Means Committee  
130 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **House Bill 0791 –Somerset County – Property Tax- Emergency Services Tax -Letter of Support**

Dear Delegate Atterbeary and Committee Members:

The Board of Commissioners for Somerset County wish to state their support of House Bill 0791 – Somerset County- Property Tax- Emergency Service Tax.

Last year, legislation was passed to allow The Board of Commissioners for Somerset County to enact local laws and adopt other measures necessary to promote the highest quality pre-hospital emergency medical care for every resident and visitor of Somerset County.

This year, the passage of this local bill will allow The Board of Commissioners for Somerset County, following a public hearing, the authority to impose an annual fee on all properties to offset the costs of County wide Emergency Services. In order to successfully implement mandatory changes going forward among our current medical service providers, the passage of this bill is imperative.

Thank you for your consideration, and we therefore powerfully recommend a **favorable report** on HB 0791 that will allow Somerset County to more adequately serve Emergency Medical Service of our residents.

Sincerely,

Charles Laird  
President

Cc: Delegate Otto

## **SB 719 EMS Fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Darryl Webster

Position: FAV

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KIRK G. SIMPKINS

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Senator Guy Guzzone  
Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 0719 –Somerset County – Property Tax- Emergency Services Tax -Letter of Support**

Dear Senator Guy Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Board of Commissioners for Somerset County wish to state their support of Senate Bill 0719 – Somerset County- Property Tax- Emergency Service Tax.

Last year, legislation was passed to allow The Board of Commissioners for Somerset County to enact local laws and adopt other measures necessary to promote the highest quality pre-hospital emergency medical care for every resident and visitor of Somerset County.

This year, the passage of this local bill will allow The Board of Commissioners for Somerset County, following a public hearing, the authority to impose an annual fee on all properties to offset the costs of County wide Emergency Services. In order to successfully implement mandatory changes going forward among our current medical service providers, the passage of this bill is imperative.

Thank you for your consideration, and we therefore powerfully recommend a **favorable report** on SB 0719 that will allow Somerset County to more adequately serve Emergency Medical Service of our residents.

Sincerely,

Charles Laird  
President

Cc: Senator Carozza

# **SB 719 - Carozza Testimony\_FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Position: FAV

**MARY BETH CAROZZA**

*Legislative District 38  
Somerset, Wicomico,  
and Worcester Counties*

Education, Energy, and  
the Environment Committee

Executive Nominations Committee



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## **THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**

**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**February 18, 2025**

**The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**SB 719 – Somerset County – Property Tax – Emergency Services Tax**

**Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza**

Thank you Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the distinguished Budget and Taxation Committee for this opportunity to present Senate Bill 719 – Somerset County – Property Tax – Emergency Services Tax.

This local, enabling legislation would allow the Board of Commissioners for Somerset County to impose an annual property tax to pay for all or part of the costs of Emergency Services in Somerset County, including fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. This annual fee would only be implemented following a public hearing with advance notice of the hearing. Several counties in Maryland already fund emergency services directly through the property tax, including Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Garrett, Howard, Kent, and Montgomery counties.

Somerset County is one of 12 Maryland counties that has a Commissioner-style government, meaning that its legislative power is limited to areas specifically authorized by the Maryland General Assembly, which explains why this local bill is before you today.

There are eight organized volunteer fire companies in Somerset County, including Ewell, Marion, Princess Anne, Tylerton, Fairmount, Crisfield, Deal Island, and Mt. Vernon. Earlier this year, the Princess Anne Volunteer Fire Company announced that it will not offer ambulance services to the community beginning July 1, 2025. The Somerset County Commissioners secured an extension of the services provided by the Princess Anne Volunteer Company until December 31, 2025 and is actively working on implementing a new Emergency Medical Services (EMS) plan for all residents.

Last year, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation (SB 807 of 2024) to allow the Somerset County Commissioners to establish an Emergency Services Advisory Council to provide the County Commissioners with recommendations regarding the operations of fire suppression, emergency medical, and hazardous materials services in the county.

SB 719 would help ensure long-term, stable funding for a reliable EMS system that meets the needs of the community – and all of our visitors coming to Somerset County for the many attractions and events held in Somerset County including the annual J. Millard Tawes Crab & Clam Bake in Crisfield to be held September 24, 2025.

The Commission to Advance and Strengthen Firefighting and Emergency Medical Services within Maryland report published on November 16, 2023 found that departments across the State are under equipped to conduct the level of recruitment required to overcome their staffing and funding needs. As you may know, all 24 counties in Maryland have seen significant decreases in recruitment and retention of firefighter and EMS personnel, which equates to a decrease in fire and EMS services in these communities, especially in the rural counties like Somerset. It is imperative that we enable our local governments with authorities to increase resources to support our firefighters and EMS personnel now and into the future.

This legislation is supported by the Somerset County Commissioners and Somerset County Emergency Services. I thank you for your kind attention and consideration, and I respectfully request a favorable and swift report on SB 719.

# **YCross Testimony SB0719.pdf**

Uploaded by: Yvette Cross

Position: FAV



My name is Yvette Cross and I am the Emergency Services Director in Somerset County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 719 – Somerset County Property Tax (Emergency Services Tax)

After approved legislation last year, Somerset County has continued to make changes to deliver the best possible service to the residents and visitors of Somerset County. The County has hired an EMS Division Coordinator who has been tasked with the building of a county run EMS system from the ground up. This will include the acquisition of ambulances, equipment and personnel (Paramedics and EMTs). The Coordinator will implement the recommendations for improvement to our current EMS system that were cited by the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services and the Somerset County EMS Task Force in 2023. In order to accomplish this, the proposed EMS tax will be needed to ensure that 24/7 EMS coverage can continue to be provided. Without the necessary funding, the safety of the citizens and visitors to Somerset County may be in jeopardy.

I sincerely thank you for your time and consideration.