



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 7, 2025

**Testimony in SUPPORT of Public Safety - Maryland 9-1-1 Board and Maryland
Department of Emergency Management - Regulatory Authority**

Summary: This bill is a follow up to the 2021 bill that upgraded the Maryland Emergency Management Agency to become the Cabinet- level, Maryland Department of Emergency Management.

However, due to an oversight in 2021, the Department was not granted the authority to adopt regulations necessary to implement and enforce the existing laws related to its responsibilities. SB138 seeks to address this gap by granting that authority, as well as restoring the regulatory powers previously held by the Maryland 9-1-1 Board.

Overview: In 2021, SB658 was passed that elevated the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to become the Cabinet-level Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM). This bill also transferred the Maryland 9-1-1 Board from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to the newly created MDEM. The new law outlined the functions, powers and duties of this new department.

The powers enumerated did not, unfortunately, include regulatory authority. As the 9-1-1 systems are county-run programs, the state's oversight agency, MDEM, needs mechanisms to enforce statewide standards.

These standards include, but not limited to:

- Development, enhancement, and transmission of planning guidelines
- Procedures for review and approval/disapproval of plans and reimbursement
- Consulting counties regarding enhancement plans
- Records and data retention
- Cybersecurity
- audits of county expenditures for the operations and maintenance of 9-1-1 systems.

Thank you and I ask for a favorable report on HB 423.