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FAVORABLE - HB 421
Public Safety - 9-1-1 Trust Fund - 9-8-8 Suicide Prevention Hotline
Health and Government Operations
Hearing Date: 11 FEB 2025

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes in **support of HB 421 - Public Safety - 9-1-1 Trust Fund - 9-8-8 Suicide Prevention Hotline**. The bill seeks to increase flexibility for public safety answer points (PSAPs) to use the 9-1-1 Trust Fund to enhance 9-1-1 systems. The bill repeals prohibitive language, which currently prevents PSAPs from using the 9-1-1 Trust Fund for enhancing integration or interoperability between 9-1-1 and 9-8-8 systems.

The goal of this legislation is to encourage increased cooperation and collaboration between 9-1-1 and 9-8-8 organizations. The strict prohibition on using 9-1-1 Trust Fund dollars towards any effort related to 9-8-8 significantly limits PSAPs from conducting joint training; pursuing interoperable and integrative technology that will benefit residents and PSAPs alike; and bringing innovative projects to the 9-1-1 Board for consideration. The Maryland 9-1-1 Board remains fiscal stewards of the Trust Fund, and the proposed language will continue to ensure 9-1-1 Trust Fund dollars benefit PSAPs. The Department believes this language will achieve the intent without risking the use of the Trust Fund for efforts that do not benefit the 9-1-1 system.

In conclusion, MDEM urges a **favorable report of HB 421 - Public Safety - 9-1-1 Trust Fund - 9-8-8 Suicide Prevention Hotline**. If you have any questions, please contact Anna Sierra, MDEM legislative liaison: anna.sierra1@maryland.gov.