



Tuesday, February 6, 2026

Written Testimony

House Bill 9 (HB0009) – Statewide 3-1-1 Non-Emergency System

Position: Favorable

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB0009, which authorizes the creation of a statewide 3-1-1 non-emergency system in Maryland.

Through participation in the 3-1-1 Workgroup, it became clear that Maryland faces a structural challenge: Public Safety Answering Points are under sustained pressure from non-emergency and administrative calls, even as they struggle with staffing shortages, burnout, and retention challenges. The Workgroup's findings show that this burden cannot be addressed through hiring alone and requires systemic change in how non-emergency requests are handled.

HB0009 provides the right framework to address this challenge by enabling a phased, equitable, and affordable statewide 3-1-1 approach. A statewide system creates a clear and consistent entry point for residents, reduces confusion about when to call 9-1-1, and provides a reliable mechanism to divert non-emergency calls away from 9-1-1 Specialists, preserving emergency capacity, and likely saving more lives.

The Workgroup's recommendations—reflected in this bill—appropriately emphasize:

- A phased implementation, allowing Maryland to start with light statewide access and scale based on proven results.
- Multilingual and accessible service, ensuring equitable access across diverse communities. Interoperability with 9-1-1, supporting seamless transfers and a “no wrong door” experience for residents.
- Strong governance, data standards, and accountability, while respecting the local nature of service delivery across counties and municipalities.

Importantly, HB0009 does not prescribe a single technology or vendor solution. Instead, it creates the conditions for Maryland to pilot, evaluate, and scale solutions that are effective, fiscally responsible, and responsive to local needs. This flexibility is critical for long-term success.

As a veteran entrepreneur who has spent my entire adult life working at the intersection of building technology for the public good (I'm a 4x VC-backed tech entrepreneur and previously worked in and ran politically for federal office), I've seen firsthand the impact voice-powered artificial intelligence has had in responding to 3-1-1 (& non-emergency 9-1-1) inquiries faster, thus saving time, money, and lives.

I've also had the honor of meeting with Senator Kagan on multiple occasions, both through the Workgroup and at various public events where her leadership and passion for this important cause has been both inspiring and motivating.

In summary, HB0009 represents a thoughtful, pragmatic step toward modernizing how Maryland handles non-emergency service requests while directly supporting the health, sustainability, and effectiveness of our 9-1-1 system. I respectfully urge a favorable report on this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your leadership on this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Ben Sanders
CEO, Hyper (callhyper.com)
ben@callhyper.com