



April 17, 2018

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) is writing you to express its support for Senate Bill 285/House Bill 634 - *Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1 Across Maryland – Establishment*, a 2018 MACo Legislative Initiative, and urges you to sign the bill into law.

Today, the key underpinnings of the legacy 9-1-1 framework are based on the same wireline, analog, circuit-switched technology that was the foundation of the original 9-1-1 architecture in 1968. Aside from an enhanced data environment and the ability to support wireless and Internet telephony, the system has not significantly changed in more than 40 years.

In order to close this gap and benefit from the monumental advancements that are taking place in commercial communications, this bill establishes the Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) Across Maryland. MACo believes this legislation is vital for the development of a statewide strategy to create a common framework for the implementation of NG911 in Maryland.

The Commission will examine the strategic aspects of NG911 implementation in coordination with the existing efforts of the Emergency Number Systems Board (ENSB), with a particular emphasis on addressing areas outside of the statutory responsibilities of the ENSB. The Commission will study and make recommendations for the implementation, technology, funding, governance, and ongoing statewide development of NG911 to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly.

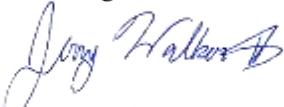
Maryland citizens demand and expect 9-1-1 emergency service to be reliable and efficient. Next-generation technology is required to keep up with this increasingly complex public safety function – improving wireless caller location, accommodating incoming text/video, and managing crisis-driven call overflows. Maryland must accelerate its move toward NG911, deliver these essential services equitably across the state, and assure effective coordination with communications providers.

The importance of this legislation cannot be overstated. Counties applaud your leadership on the Text to 9-1-1 initiative, and hope to build upon that momentum as we work to implement NG911 in Maryland. MACo as an organization stands ready to work with you, your Appointments Office, and other stakeholders to populate the Commission quickly, so they can begin their important work.

In conclusion, this Commission is critical to the ongoing and future success of 9-1-1 as Maryland's resource for emergency assistance. This legislation urges a statewide effort to guide this critical transition, harnessing public safety industry leadership and expertise to address complex public safety concerns. For this reason, MACo urges you to sign SB 285/HB 634.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,



Jerry Walker
President, MACo
Council Member, Anne Arundel County



Michael Sanderson
Executive Director, MACo