



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 746 - Public Safety - State Fire Marshal - Sprinkler Systems Enforcement

SPONSOR: Senator Beidle

HEARING DATE: March 5, 2020

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 746 - Public Safety - State Fire Marshal - Sprinkler Systems Enforcement**, which provides authority to the State Fire Marshal to enforce residential sprinkler laws relating to new home construction.

The Prince George's County Fire and Emergency Medical Services (Fire/EMS) Department serves a population of nearly one million residents in an area that represents over five hundred square miles. The major metropolitan department responds to over 152,000 calls for emergency service annually, with over 300,000 unit responses per year to provide public safety resources to the residents and visitors of Prince George's County.

Prince George's County has legally required residential sprinkler systems to be installed in new homes for decades. For nearly 30 years, Prince George's County has not suffered a life loss in a residential house fire where fully functional sprinkler system was installed. During this same time-period, Prince George's County has averaged nearly 10 fire fatalities per year in non-sprinklered residential home fires. This statistic alone must be a deciding factor in this testimony for the safety value of requiring residential sprinkler systems.

The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department has advocated for several years with our public safety partners to require sprinkler systems in new residential construction statewide. In their efforts to ensure life safety relating to fire sprinkler installation, they have stood with the Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office, the Maryland State Fireman's Association, the National Fallen Firefighter's Foundation, and the National Fire Sprinkler Association.

HB 823 will reassign this legal authority of enforcement to the Maryland State Fire Marshal. The Maryland State Fire Marshal is the subject matter expert relating to fire sprinklers and fire safety laws. The responsibility of fire sprinkler installation enforcement must be granted to the State Fire Marshal

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 746** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.