



Testimony before the Maryland Senate

Senate Bill: Senate Bill 101

Position: SUPPORT

Date: January 17, 2021

My name is Randall Cunningham and I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 101. I have been employed with Harford County Government for over 20 years, working for the Department of Emergency Services, providing support and management for the department, which includes our County's 9-1-1 PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point). I have also served on the Maryland 9-1-1 Board for the for the past 21 Months as a board member, and current Chairman of the Cybersecurity Subcommittee. Last year I was appointed to the Next Generation 9-1-1 Commission supporting Cybersecurity roles for that Commission.

Over the past 20 years supporting 9-1-1 in the county, I have witnessed significant changes from what was previously a very simple procedure of a resident calling for help, to what is progressing to be a very highly technical system, interconnected and communicating across jurisdictions and states. Gone are the days of a simple phone call and asking for assistance; now systems are being enhanced by the impact of technology in today's world, and tomorrow's new innovations. Already today, our 9-1-1 Specialists can receive voice and text messages, but for phones that are capable, the 9-1-1 Specialist can view the location of that phone on a map. These recent enhancements are assisting "Step 2" of the system, the Field Responders, our dedicated Fire, Medical and Law Enforcement staff, to respond to the incident, locate the caller, and provide life and property saving techniques.

Tomorrow's world of technology will enhance this system by allowing for more accurate call routing, ability to transfer 9-1-1 calls to any jurisdiction without losing capabilities, transfer of images or videos, and other services that have become accepted as common communication methods in today's world.

Without the system we know as "9-1-1" and the future "NG 9-1-1," there would be a severe impact to the getting the help needed to the residents and visitors of the State of Maryland. Any effort to negatively impact this infrastructure and lifesaving system, or cause interruptions, delays or false statements should be prohibited. We have all witnessed attempts to infect and disable computer networks in every area of today's infrastructure. We must protect our Public Safety infrastructure from these attempts and establish penalties or those attempting to do so.

In today's world the community expects to be able to communicate with 9-1-1 and public safety services the way they communicate with each other. The systems and technologies that allow that level of communication, unfortunately, also allows those with malicious intent to use those same systems as a pathway to cause harm and disruption. By supporting Senate Bill 101, you are allowing law enforcement and the judicial system to prosecute those malicious actors.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Randall J. Cunningham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Randall J. Cunningham
Public Safety Manager
Harford County Government