



Committee: Finance Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 241

Title: Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services - 9-8-8 Trust Fund

Hearing Date: February 8, 2022

Position: Support

The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) supports *Senate Bill 241 – Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services - 9-8-8 Trust Fund*. This bill creates a trust fund to support the implementation of 9-8-8.

When fully implemented, the 9-8-8 system will allow Marylanders to access crisis services by using an easy-to-remember three-digit number. This system will reduce the burden on the 9-1-1 system and will also more quickly connect people to crisis services instead of more generalized emergency services. In order for the 9-8-8 system to be effective, there will need to be an ongoing commitment to supporting crisis services in the state. Creating a 9-8-8 trust fund is an important first step in developing a robust crisis response system in the state. This trust fund will also help facilitate the state receiving federal funds to support 9-8-8 implementation.

We urge a favorable report on House Bill 293 in order to help modernize our state's emergency petition process. If we can provide any further information, please contact Scott Tiffin at stiffin@policypartners.net.