



Baltimore County Federation of Public Employees
* BCFPE Local #4883 ** AFT ** AFL-CIO *
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March 02, 2022

RE: FAVORABLE- SB374: Workers Compensation – Occupational Disease Presumptions – 9-1-1 Specialists

Honorable Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Kasia Gatchalian and I am the Vice President of The Baltimore County Federation of Public Employees who represents approximately 300 active and retired Baltimore County 911 Center Employees. I have worked as a 911 Call-Taker and a Police Dispatcher for 20 years and I have served as an Emergency Communications Assistant Supervisor in Police Dispatch for the last eight years. Over the years I have witnessed these hard-working men and women perform countless acts of sacrifice and commitment. As a 911 Specialist these men and women face similar challenges that a police officer, paramedic, and firefighter does daily. 911 Center Specialists work long shifts, while being exposed to hours and hours of traumatic incidents. We need to recognize the stress and burnout these 911 Specialists face and provide them the compensation for facing the secondary traumatic stress they are exposed to on a daily basis. There is a saying in the 911 community; "your worst day is my work day." Many of the employees in this field became 911 Center Specialists because they want to help people-- even at the sacrifice of their own mental health, including their emotional and social well-being. This Bill would allow 911 Specialists to join Police Officers and Firefighters in receiving better workplace injury compensation. SB374 would finally allow our dedicated 911 Specialists to be added to this benefit.

Because of this I urge you to support SB374. This is much needed for our dedicated 911 Specialists.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vice President Kasia Gatchalian

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