



SUPPORT - HB745
Criminal Law - False Statements - Emergency or Commission of Crime
(Antiswatting Act of 2023)

Maryland Department of Emergency Management
Judiciary Committee
Hearing Date: 23 FEB 2023

Chairman Luke Clippinger
Judiciary Committee
Room 101
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 20401

Chairman Clippinger,

The Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) writes today **in support of HB0745 - Criminal Law - False Statements - Emergency or Commission of Crime (Antiswatting Act of 2023).**

The Swatting Task Force Report released in 2023 recommends that “Maryland should enact a freestanding swatting-specific criminal prohibition.” As home of the Maryland 9-1-1 Board, MDEM supports the Task Force’s thoughtful recommendation and the resulting bill, HB0745. HB0745 seeks to criminalize occurrences when an individual intentionally calls 9-1-1 with knowingly false information for the purposes of dispatching law enforcement response to an individual who the caller knows to be innocent, or with the specific purpose of causing bodily harm to an individual. As the Swatting Task Force report documents, these calls place innocent individuals and responding emergency services in grave danger, and use 9-1-1 systems as weapons against residents. The impact of these events erode confidence and trust in public safety and emergency services.

In summary, the Maryland Department of Emergency Management respectfully requests a **favorable report on HB0745.**