

## **Delegate Susan Krebs – Public Safety 9-1-1 Legislation**

### **Improving Emergency Management**

For the past three years, I have been a member of the *Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1- Across Maryland* (NG911). The Commission's recommendations in their annual reports have been incorporated into nine laws with bipartisan support. As a result of our efforts, Maryland is a national leader as we transition to NG911. This year, two bills I sponsored passed that will implement key recommendations from the Commission's third annual report.

#### **Public Safety – 9–1–1 Emergency Telephone System – Alterations**

Requires additional mental health training for 9-1-1- Specialists. There is an emotional toll on 9-1-1- Specialists, especially now that they are responding to live videos and texts. Providing our current and future 9-1-1- Specialists with the tools to handle traumatic events will help reduce burnout, turnover, and long-term onboarding costs.

In order to address the persistent shortage of 9-1-1 specialists, the bill also requires the Board to establish and host an information hub to boost recruitment activities for 9-1-1 centers.

The bill also adds necessary expertise to the Maryland 9-1-1 Board by adding additional representation, including a county finance professional, county 0-1-1 specialists, an expert from the cybersecurity industry and a member to represent persons with disabilities.

The bill also clarifies that county governments and the State Fire Marshall have the authority to enforce "Kari's Law" which ensures that all multi-line telephone systems in office buildings, campuses and hotels are programmed to automatically dial 9-1-1 without requiring a prefix such as "9" to reach an outside line.

#### **Maryland Department of Emergency Management – Establishment and Transfer of Maryland 9–1–1 Board**

Upgrades the *Maryland Emergency Management Agency* (MEMA) to a Cabinet-level Department and transfers the 9-1-1 Board to this new Department (currently, they are awkwardly housed under the Department of Corrections). This will align our emergency management services to be better able to support our local 9-1-1 operations. This change is very timely with the important work of our emergency managers highlighted during our State of Emergency.