



House Bill 308

Public Safety - Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board - Established

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

Date: January 30, 2014

To: Health and Government Operations Committee

From: Robin J. Clark

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 308. This bill would establish the Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board in the Department of Information Technology. The Radio Control Board would manage and oversee MD FiRST, the Statewide Interoperable Public Safety Radio System. County governments across Maryland have partnered with the State in building MD FiRST and are pleased to support the creation of an inclusive and representative governance body to ensure the System's continued success.

In 2010, the State of Maryland began building an interoperable radio system for first responders to use statewide in an emergency. MD FiRST is now operational throughout central Maryland and the Eastern Shore, and state and local public safety agencies are beginning to use the system. Several county public safety agencies are already realizing the benefits of joining Maryland FiRST, including the ability to coordinate operations across jurisdictional lines. Some counties, however, have been hesitant to join MD FiRST because of its lack of governance structure.

The creation of an inclusive and representative governance structure ensures that progress on MD FiRST, including its technical completion, and user participation, will continue. The Radio Control Board as envisioned reflects the partnership between users that is integral to the viability of shared communications system and will be key to the completion of MD FiRST over the next couple of years. The Radio Control Board representative membership will be ideal for leading coordinated efforts including shared infrastructure, joint procurement of equipment, standardized procedures, prioritized maintenance, and collaborative assessment of resources. The Board will also be best suited to represent the System's users in developing agreements with federal agencies and other outside users.

For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 308 and recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report.

Attached to this testimony are letters of support from Caroline County, Cecil County, Garrett County, Montgomery County, Queen Anne's County, the Maryland Emergency Management Association (MEMA), and the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA).

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS *of* CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND

LARRY C. PORTER
VICE PRESIDENT

JEFFERSON L. GHRIST
PRESIDENT

WILBUR LEVENGOOD, JR.
COMMISSIONER

SARA B. VISINTAINER
CHIEF OF STAFF

KEN DECKER
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

HEATHER L. PRICE
COUNTY ATTORNEY

January 28, 2014

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Norman H. Conway
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

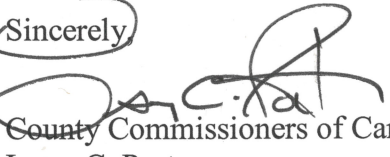
Dear Chairman Hammen and Chairman Conway:

The County Commissioners of Caroline County strongly support SB 338/HB 308 – Public Safety – Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board – Established.

County governments have been reluctant to join the Maryland FiRST radio communication system while its governance system was undefined and did not include local officials. However, the Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board that would be created by the proposed legislation solves this problem and creates an oversight structure that will be both fair and effective. With the governance issue resolved, the door to participation in the system by local governments had been opened – participation that will both enhance system quality for everyone and save counties millions of dollars.

We appreciate the support of the Governor in this effort and respectfully urge your committees to further this opportunity for a more effective and collaborative emergency communications system by issuing a favorable report on SB 338/HB 308.

Sincerely,



County Commissioners of Caroline County
Larry C. Porter
Vice President

C: Caroline County State Legislative Delegation
Michael Sanderson, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Counties

Tari Moore
County Executive

Alfred C. Wein, Jr.
Director of Administration



Office: 410.996.5202
Fax: 410.996.1014

County Information
410.996.5200
410.658.4041

CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Office of the County Executive
200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Suite 2100, Elkton, MD 21921

January 30, 2014

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Norman H. Conway
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
House Office Building, Room 121
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Hammen and Chairman Conway,

I am writing today to support HB308 and the creation of an 11 member Radio Control Board that includes 5 local representatives. The Board will be responsible for establishing standard operating procedures, and for managing system users, technical enhancements, maintenance and infrastructure sharing agreements. The Board will also review annual cost estimations for the radio system and advise the Governor and General Assembly on the resources needed each year.

The *Collaborative Public Safety Radio Systems* included in the Governor's initiatives for this session of the General Assembly will be an asset to our Public Safety Officials, improving incident management, and providing invaluable assistance during catastrophic emergency response.

With the cooperation of local partners, each jurisdiction will be able to use Maryland FiRST to communicate seamlessly with its neighbors, State partners, and federal responders. Local governments participating in Maryland FiRST not only enhance the system's interoperability, they also provide access to existing infrastructure that can reduce project costs and extend last-mile connectivity. Without a governance structure established to manage and oversee Maryland FiRST, however, local governments have little assurance regarding the system's maintenance, oversight and management. Creation of a governance body that includes local representation will help to secure critical local investment.

In 2012, The Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) formally recommended that a radio governance board with membership from both State and local agencies be established to oversee the network.

Sincerely,


Tari Moore
County Executive

CC: Richard Brooks, Director, Cecil County Department of Emergency Services

THE BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

203 South Fourth Street - Courthouse - Room 207 Oakland, Maryland 21550

www.garrettcounty.org countycommissioners@garrettcounty.org

301-334-8970

301-895-3188

FAX 301-334-5000

Board of Commissioners

Gregan T. Crawford

Robert G. Gatto

James M. Raley

County Administrator

R. Lamont Pagenhardt

County Attorney

Gorman E. Getty III

January 28, 2014

The Honorable Peter Hammen
Chairman
Health & Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HOUSE BILL 308 – PUBLIC SAFETY – STATEWIDE INTEROPERABILITY RADIO CONTROL BOARD – ESTABLISHED

Dear Chairman Hammen:

We, the Board of Garrett County Commissioners, would like to register our support for House Bill 308, Public Safety – Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board – Established.

This legislation would establish a statewide interoperability radio control board in the Department of Information Technology. In 2012, the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) formally recommended that a radio governance board with membership from both State and local agencies be established to oversee the network.

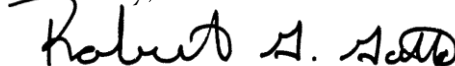
Through the Governor's commitment to interoperable communications for public safety officers statewide, the first stages have been completed (Maryland FiRST) and the system is already providing enhanced radio performance and is anticipated to be fully operational within the next few years.

The new Board would establish standard operating procedures, quality of service standards, and maintenance guidelines for the system as well as advising the Governor and General Assembly on resources needed to meet the needs for public safety communications statewide.

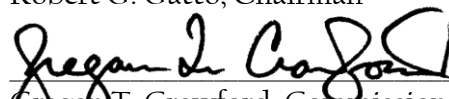
We respectfully request that you consider setting forth legislation to establish such a Board.

Thank you.

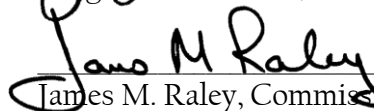
Sincerely,



Robert G. Gatto, Chairman



Gregan T. Crawford, Commissioner



James M. Raley, Commissioner



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS (toll free): 301-261-2461

HB 308

DATE: January 30, 2014

SPONSOR: The Speaker (By Request- Administration)

ASSIGNED TO: Health and Government Operations and Appropriations

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar

POSITION: SUPPORT

Public Safety- Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board- Established

Montgomery County supports HB 308 to establish a formal governance structure responsible for the collaborative management of Maryland FiRST, the State's new 700MHz public safety communications system. Statewide interoperability is critical during regional disasters requiring seamless communication between our local, state and federal emergency response partners, as well as ensuring a reliable communications system responsive to day-to-day emergencies crossing county lines.

Montgomery County has been participating in Maryland FiRST not only to enhance the system's interoperability, but also to provide access to existing infrastructure that can reduce project costs and extend last-mile connectivity. The County is committed to improving public safety technology, and we participate in monthly meetings of Maryland's Practitioner Steering Committee of the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee responsible for promoting compatible communications systems for emergency and public safety agencies. The creation of a governance board comprised of both state and local agencies will secure significant and essential local investment and ensure the success of a statewide public safety radio system.

Montgomery County urges a favorable report on HB 308.



**Queen
Anne's
County**

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
David L. Dunmyer, District 1
Bob Simmons, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Dave Olds, District 4

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Liberty Building
107 North Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617

Telephone: (410) 758-4098

Fax: (410) 758-1170

e-mail: QACCommissioners&Administrator@qac.org

County Administrator: Gregg A. Todd

Executive Assistant to County Commissioners: Margie A. Houck

County Attorney: Patrick Thompson, Esquire

January 28, 2014

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Hammen:

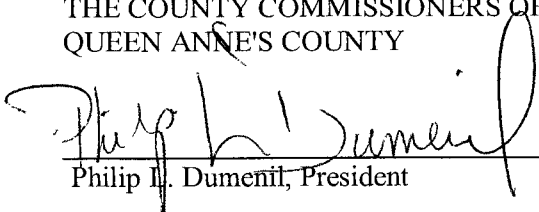
The Queen Anne's County Board of Commissioners strongly supports HB308 which creates an 11 member Radio Control Board that includes 5 local representatives. The Board will be responsible for establishing standard operating procedures, and for managing system users, technical enhancements, maintenance and infrastructure sharing agreements. It will also review annual cost estimations for the radio system and advise the Governor and General Assembly on the resources needed each year.

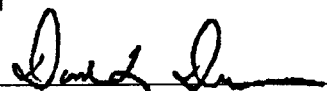
As you know, governments participating in Maryland FiRST will be able to communicate seamlessly with local, state and federal partners, and this enhanced interoperability will improve incident management and become an invaluable tool during any catastrophic emergency.

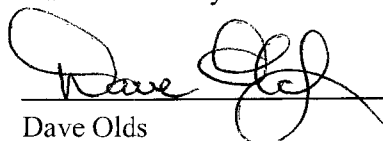
Creation of a Radio Control Board with representatives from both State and County governments brings the potential for significant cost savings and opportunities to enhance the system's quality.

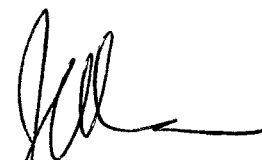
Sincerely,

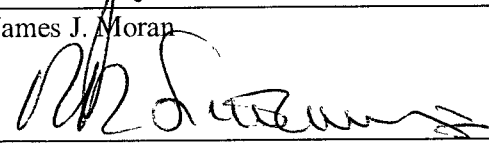
THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY


Philip L. Dumenil, President


David L. Dunmyer


Dave Olds


James J. Moran


Bob Simmons



**Queen
Anne's
County**

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
David L. Dunmyer, District 1
Bob Simmons, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Dave Olds, District 4

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Liberty Building
107 North Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617

Telephone: (410) 758-4098

Fax: (410) 758-1170

e-mail: QACCommissioners&Administrator@qac.org

County Administrator: Gregg A. Todd

Executive Assistant to County Commissioners: Margie A. Houck

County Attorney: Patrick Thompson, Esquire

January 28, 2014

The Honorable Norman H. Conway
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Conway:

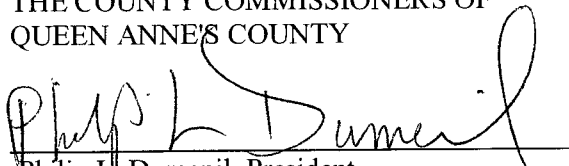
The Queen Anne's County Board of Commissioners strongly supports HB308 which creates an 11 member Radio Control Board that includes 5 local representatives. The Board will be responsible for establishing standard operating procedures, and for managing system users, technical enhancements, maintenance and infrastructure sharing agreements. It will also review annual cost estimations for the radio system and advise the Governor and General Assembly on the resources needed each year.


As you know, governments participating in Maryland FiRST will be able to communicate seamlessly with local, state and federal partners, and this enhanced interoperability will improve incident management and become an invaluable tool during any catastrophic emergency.

Creation of a Radio Control Board with representatives from both State and County governments brings the potential for significant cost savings and opportunities to enhance the system's quality.

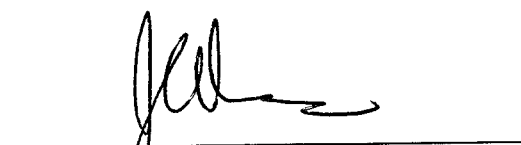
Sincerely,

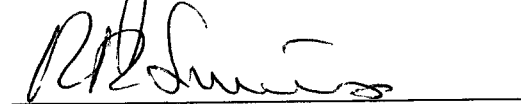
THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY


Philip L. Dumenil, President


David L. Dunmyer


Dave Olds


James J. Moran


Bob Simmons



Worcester County Emergency Services, 1 West Market Street, Government Center
Room # 1002, Snow Hill MD 21863

www.mdema.org

Joseph J. Theobald, *President*
president@mdema.org

Marianne Souders, *Vice President*
vicepresident@mdema.org

Fred Webster, *Secretary*
secretary@mdema.org

Cindy Towers, *Treasurer*
treasurer@mdema.org

January 30, 2014

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Norman H. Conway
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Hammen and Chairman Conway,

On behalf of the Maryland Emergency Management Association, I am writing to request your support of HB 308 Statewide interoperability Radio control Board – Established.

Through your commitment to interoperable communications for public safety statewide, the first stages of Maryland FiRST have been completed and the system is already providing enhanced radio performance in the eastern and central regions of Maryland. Anticipated to be fully operational within the next few years, Maryland FiRST will allow public safety responders from State, County and Local agencies to communicate across a single, interoperable system, improving incident management from day-to-day and providing invaluable assistance during catastrophic emergency response.

With the cooperation of all partners, each jurisdictional entity would have the ability to utilize Maryland FiRST to communicate seamlessly with its neighbor, the State, and Federal responders. Governments participating in Maryland FiRST not only enhance the system's interoperability, they also provide access to existing infrastructure that can reduce project costs and extend connectivity. Without a governance structure

established to manage and oversee Maryland FiRST, those utilizing the system have little assurance regarding oversight of the system. The creation of a governance board with committed representatives of the State and Counties, as well as recognized jurisdictions and statewide associations will protect everyone's interests and provide users with a role in the system's oversight and management, including infrastructure sharing coordination, network prioritization, standardized operations, and financial decisions.

In 2012, The Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) formally recommended that a radio governance board with membership from both State and Local agencies be established to oversee the network. I respectfully request your support for HB 308 so that we may realize this goal. Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Theobald

Joseph J. Theobald, President
Maryland Emergency Management Association

MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel

www.msfa.org

Jacqueline Olson
President



January 30, 2014

The Honorable Peter A. Hammen
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Norman H. Conway
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 121
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Hammen and Chairman Conway,

On behalf of the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA), which represents 372 member volunteer companies and over 25,000 volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Service personnel across this great State, I am writing to request your support of HB308 – Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board - Established.

Through your commitment to interoperable communications for public safety officers statewide, the first stages of Maryland FiRST have been completed and the system is already providing enhanced radio performance in the eastern and central regions of Maryland. Anticipated to be fully operational within the next few years, Maryland FiRST will allow public safety officers from State agencies and local jurisdictions to communicate across a single, interoperable system, improving incident management from day-to-day and providing invaluable assistance during catastrophic emergency response.

With the cooperation of local volunteer Fire, Rescue, and EMS personnel, and other public safety agencies, each jurisdiction will be able to use Maryland FiRST to communicate seamlessly with its neighbors. Local governments participating in Maryland FiRST not only enhance the system's interoperability, they also provide access to existing infrastructure that can reduce project costs and extend last-mile connectivity. Without a governance structure established to manage and oversee

Maryland FiRST, however, local governments have little assurance regarding the system's maintenance, oversight and management. Creation of a governance body that includes local representation will help to secure critical local investment.

In 2012, The Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) formally recommended that a radio governance board with membership from both State and local agencies be established to oversee the network. We respectfully request your support of HB308.

Respectfully,

Jacqueline Olson

Jacqueline Olson
President