



House Bill 607

Public Safety – Crisis Intervention Team Center of Excellence

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Judiciary Committee

Date: February 18, 2020

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 607 as it establishes a framework to help advance crisis intervention teams in Maryland.

HB 607 would establish a Crisis Intervention Team Center of Excellence (CITCE) in the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP). The Center serves the dual purposes of providing technical support to local governments, law enforcement, public safety agencies, behavioral health agencies, and crisis service providers as well as developing and implementing model crisis intervention programs.

The bill also establishes a Collaborative Planning and Implementation Committee that is charged with reviewing and evaluating the services and training provided by the Center. The Committee includes a range of state and local stakeholders ensuring that unique viewpoints and expertise are employed in overseeing the Center.

Crisis intervention teams offer a community-based approach to improve the outcomes of interactions between first responders and those suffering from a behavioral health crisis. The Center and Committee establish a structure to help local governments and their agents establish effective, evidence-based crisis intervention programs. For these reasons MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 607.