



Senate Bill 927

Alarm Systems – Registration and Renewal - Penalties

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
with AMENDMENTS

Date: March 6, 2018

To: Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs Committee

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 927 with AMENDMENTS** to ensure counties retain the authority to take swift action against alarm system contractors that shirk their responsibilities and violate local laws.

SB 927 sets parameters for when a county or municipality may impose a penalty against an alarm system contractor for failing to register an alarm system or renew an alarm system registration as required under local law. The bill provides for a 10-day period before a county may penalize an alarm company for failing to properly register or renew an alarm system. This 10-day time frame hinders the ability of local governments to effectively hold bad acting contractors accountable.

Proper and prompt registration of an alarm system is an important tool for local governments to combat false alarms and the drain of valuable police time and resources that accompany them. Registration and renewals help ensure that local governments are able to quickly identify and contact alarm users prior to the dispatch of police resources.

Improper or missing registrations can result in confusion and dangerous delays of police response. For instance, Baltimore City and Baltimore County share 15 different zip codes. Without proper registration, calls may come into the wrong jurisdiction for police dispatch, delaying prompt police response.

These amendments strike a necessary balance. The parameters set by the bill for imposing a penalty on alarm contractors ensure that they will only be penalized for these specific violations, rather than for actions outside of their control. Removing the 10-day period will help ensure counties are able to hold contractors accountable for violating local law in a timely fashion.

For these reasons MACo urges a **FAVORABLE with AMENDMENTS** report on SB 927.

Amendments

Amendment No. 1

On page 1, in lines 4 and 7, in each instance, strike “or the alarm user’s”; and strike beginning with “within” in line 8 down through “service” in line 9.

Amendment No. 2

On page 2, in lines 12 and 23 in each instance, strike “AN EMERGENCY” and substitute “A”; in line 13 after “USER;” insert “AND”; in lines 14 and 25, in each instance, strike “THE ALARM USER OR”; strike beginning with the semicolon in line 15 down through “DISPATCH” in line 18; and strike beginning with “THE” in line 27 down through “DISPATCH” in line 29 and substitute “THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY PROVIDED THE ALARM SYSTEM CONTRACTOR NOTICE THAT:”

- (I) THE ALARM SYSTEM’S REGISTRATION IS EXPIRED;
- (II) THE ALARM USER OR THE ALARM SYSTEM CONTRACTOR DID NOT RENEW THE ALARM SYSTEM’S REGISTRATION; OR
- (III) THE ALARM SYSTEM’S REGISTRATION HAS BEEN SUSPENDED.