



## Senate Bill 1054

### *Public Information Act - 9-1-1 Communications - Denial of Part of a Public Record*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Health, & Environmental  
Affairs Committee

Date: February 22, 2018

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 1054 as it provides reasonable protections for an individual's personal information under the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA) for transmissions received by emergency dispatch personnel.

This bill requires a custodian to deny inspection, under the PIA, of any part of a 9-1-1 communications record that contains personally identifiable or relevant information, third party information under specified conditions, and images that may be considered gory or gruesome or convey scenes of murder or suicide.

This bill anticipates the implementation of Next-Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) in Maryland. NG911 will improve and enhance the handling of 9-1-1 calls from cell phone users with technology that will increase response times, location accuracy, and allow text, photo, and video data to be shared by callers to First Responders on their way to the emergency.

The PIA works well for paper documents and similar media but is not configured to properly address the massive amounts of media that will be created through NG911. Even the update to the PIA several years ago to better handle electronic records focused more on static records like documents, spreadsheets, and database search results.

Unlike legacy 9-1-1 networks, which primarily rely on voice data, NG911 will generate media never before subject to public scrutiny – including the insides of private homes and businesses. The potential for abusive use of such media, including posting on the internet, is extremely high.

SB 1054 is narrowly crafted to protect sensitive information and prevent unwarranted invasions of personal privacy from media obtained through NG911 networks. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 1054.