

CALVIN BALL  
County Executive



LISA D. MYERS  
Chief of Police

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

**DATE:** October 21, 2020

**FROM:** Lisa Myers *APM*  
Chief of Police

**TO:** Lonnie Robbins  
Chief Administrative Officer

**SUBJECT:** Kari's Law Testimony

Please accept this as my testimony in support of Council Bill 2020-XX.

As you likely know, on December 1, 2013, Kari Hunt was fatally attacked in a Texas hotel by her estranged husband. Kari's nine-year-old daughter tried calling 911 during the struggle but was unable to make a connection because the phone system required a caller to first dial 9 for an outside line. Her tragic death led to national legislation on direct access dialing for 911 calls.

Many telephone systems for hotels, motels, schools and businesses still require that a user dial an additional number to obtain an outside line. Persons unfamiliar with such a requirement may still be unable to reach emergency services in a crisis, which can lead to similar disastrous results.

The Howard County Police Department fully supports the required local legislation that brings us into compliance with Maryland General Assembly 2020 amendment to Section 1.314 of the Public Safety Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to ensure that local jurisdictions require direct 911 access. The Police Department is working closely with the Fire Department to launch a public awareness campaign and have existing fire code inspectors check for compliance during standard visits.

Our compliance is also mandatory to continue to receive funding from the 9-1-1 Trust Fund. In accordance with subtitle 1-309, future requests for disbursements from the fund must include a certification of appropriate actions taken by the County under Chapter 376, 2020. For reference, Howard County has received \$2,835,022.41 so far, through the third quarter of fiscal year 2020.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions regarding this legislation.

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