



## MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council  
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Alice Kennedy, Acting Housing Commissioner



Date: July 7, 2021

### **Re: City Council Bill 21-0085 Baltimore City Fire Code – Telephone Access to 9-1-1 Emergency System**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 21-0085 for the purpose of requiring that certain multiple-line telephone systems allow for the direct dial of 9-1-1; defining certain terms; authorizing certain inspections; providing for certain fines; and generally relating to access to the City's 9-1-1 emergency system.

If enacted, City Council Bill 21-0085 would amend the Building Code to allow the Office of the Fire Marshall within the Baltimore City Fire Department, to inspect the installation and operation of multi-line telephone systems and enforce compliance of Kari's Law, which requires multi-line telephone systems to directly route 911 calls, without the need to dial a prefix to reach an outside line. Those found in violation of the ordinance may be subject to a \$100 fine for the first offense and a \$200 fine for subsequent offenses.

Kari's law was enacted in Maryland in 2013 and became Federal Law in 2018. In 2020 the Maryland Public Safety Article was amended to allow enforcement by local jurisdictions. DHCD supports the Administrations efforts to implement this legislation in compliance with State and Federal Law in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of anyone using a multi-line telephone system in the City of Baltimore.

DHCD **supports** the passage of City Council Bill 21-0085.

AK/sm

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*