



# BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor

**Michael S. Harrison**  
Police Commissioner

October 25, 2022

Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council  
Room 400, City Hall  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**RE: City Council Bill #22-0127R  
Informational Hearing- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

Dear Council President Mosby and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) has reviewed Council Bill 22-0127R for the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department, the Baltimore City Fire Department, the Baltimore Police Department, the Department of Finance, the Baltimore City Law Department, and other interested parties to appear before the City Council to discuss the implementation of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and its anticipated impact on individuals that use this resource.

In 2020, Deaths associated with alcohol, drugs, and suicide combined, increased by 20% nationally, the highest recorded increase during a single year<sup>1</sup>. With the severe mental health crisis facing our country, BPD is committed to partnering with other agencies to address this problem locally and to support an easier pathway for individuals in need of psychiatric care and crisis counseling.

The BPD has no objections to City Council Bill 22-0127R. Thank you for allowing us to comment on this piece of legislation. We look forward to this continuing discussion on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wirzberger, Esq.  
Chief of Staff

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<sup>1</sup> Warren, Molly. *Pain In the Nation: The Epidemics of Alcohol, Drug, and Suicide Deaths 2022*. Washington, DC: Trust for America's Health, 2022

Director of Government Affairs

cc: Natwana Austin, Executive Secretary of the Baltimore City Council  
Natasha Mehu, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations  
Nina Themelis, Special Assistant and Legislative Liaison, MOGR  
Andrew Smullian, BPD Deputy Chief of Staff

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