



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT

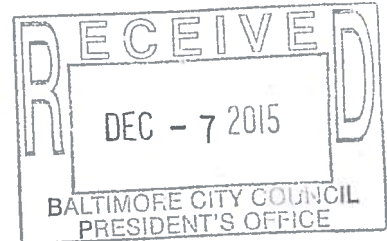


Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

Kevin Davis
Police Commissione

December 4, 2015

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



Attention: Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

**Re: City Council Bill No. 15-0264R
Restoring 911 as an Efficient and Responsive Public Safety Partner Upon
Which Baltimore City Callers Can Confidently Rely for Help**

Dear Council President Young and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD or the Department) has reviewed Council Bill 15-0264R. This resolution is for the purpose of calling upon the City Administration and Baltimore Police Department to immediately restore 911 operators and dispatchers as public safety employees with the Baltimore Police Department; to cross-train operators and dispatchers so that both groups can handle either position; and to provide adequate staffing and sufficient management of emergency communications. While the Department agrees with making improvements to Baltimore's emergency communications, additional resources are needed to accomplish all that is called for in this resolution. Because those resources have not yet been identified, the Department takes no position on this resolution.

Over the last several months, police dispatchers have been moved from the Mayor's Office of Information Technology (MOIT) to the BPD. As a result, those dispatchers will receive benefits consistent with other BPD employees. 911 Operators have moved from MOIT to the Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD). It is expected that these moves will result in operational improvements and quality of life improvements for operators and dispatchers. The Department agrees in concept that there might be value in cross-training operators and dispatchers so that both groups can handle either position. However, there are a number of factors to consider in making such a move, such as disparities in certification and standards, training, and pay before dispatchers and operators can be made interchangeable. Therefore, there will be a monetary cost associated with such cross-training. Lastly, the Department agrees that adequate staffing and sufficient management are needed with respect to emergency communications in Baltimore. Recently, the City was able to hire and train 7 additional 911 operators, which has helped reduce congestion in the 911 system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The Department looks forward to working with the City Council on this matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew G. Vetter
Director of Government Affairs

No position