

Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials, International
Congressional Fire Services Institute
International Association of Fire Chiefs
National Association of Counties
National Emergency Number Association
National League of Cities

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Ted Stevens, Chairman
The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye, Ranking Minority Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation

DATE: August 9, 2005

RE: Telecommunications Act

We appreciate your leadership in developing legislation that would update our nation's telecommunications laws. We are writing to ask that important public safety considerations be included in the development of comprehensive legislation that encourages communications innovations and their widespread deployment. Public safety as well as the citizens it serves depends on affordable and high quality communications services

Public safety officials, who process and respond to 911 emergency calls, think it is very important that the legislation include a clear statement on the jurisdiction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish rules requiring providers of interconnected voice telecommunications services to provide their customers with E9-1-1 capability. The FCC recently acted responsibly and effectively when it issued a rulemaking that addresses the need for new communications technologies such as VoIP providers to provide E9-1-1. We applaud FCC Chairman Kevin Martin and the FCC commissioners for their actions.

We also applaud provisions in pending legislation that would confirm FCC jurisdiction concerning E9-1-1 and IP-enabled voice communications. But Congress needs to make the FCC's jurisdiction on E9-1-1 and the responsibility of telecommunications service providers for E9-1-1 crystal clear. As interconnected voice telecommunications services advance and innovate in the future, no lag time should exist between their deployment in the marketplace and their ability to provide their customers from Day One with E9-1-1 service. The FCC's jurisdictional mandate to require such E9-1-1 capabilities should be stated clearly in the legislation you are developing.

Thank you again for your leadership in developing responsible new laws governing America's telecommunications networks and for your consideration of our views on this important public safety issue. We urge you to include a clear and unambiguous provision on the FCC's jurisdiction to require E9-1-1 for all interconnected voice telecommunications services. Thank you.

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