



NEW JERSEY CAREER FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

"Leading New Jersey's Fire Service Since 1928"

www.njcfca.org

January 5, 2026

The Honorable Brett Guthrie

Chair, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Hudson

Chair, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: Support for Reauthorization of the First Responder Network Authority

Dear Chair Guthrie and Chair Hudson:

The New Jersey Career Fire Chiefs Association represents over 100 fire service leaders from agencies across the state. Our members are committed to advancing the protection of life, property, and the environment through leadership, education, and advocacy. On behalf of our members, I write to express our strong support for the reauthorization of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority).

As leaders of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and its Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, you play a central role in ensuring the continuity and advancement of the nation's only dedicated public safety broadband network.

The FirstNet Authority was established by Congress in 2012 following communication challenges identified during major national emergencies, including the September 11, 2001, attacks. Congress created the FirstNet Authority within the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to provide first responders with a secure, interoperable, and resilient communications network designed specifically for public safety operations.

Since its inception, the FirstNet Authority has successfully met its congressional mandate. The nationwide network was completed on schedule and within budget, providing reliable, prioritized, and preemptive broadband communications to more than 30,000 public safety agencies across approximately 3.0 million square miles of coverage. It operates under a fiscally responsible, self-sustaining funding model, requiring no ongoing appropriations from Congress. It has been called the single most successful public private partnership in America.



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The oversight structure of the FirstNet Authority Board, which includes both public safety and industry leaders, ensures accountability, transparency, and continued innovation. The Authority's

success has resulted in a trusted ecosystem of public safety applications, devices, and solutions that enhance situational awareness and coordination during complex incidents.

Reauthorization of the FirstNet Authority before the 2027 deadline is essential to maintaining the operational integrity and modernization of this network. The United States Government Accountability Office has emphasized that failure to reauthorize the Authority would jeopardize the sustainability of the network and undermine the confidence of the first responder community.

New Jersey's fire service community has witnessed firsthand the operational value of FirstNet during response to numerous man-made, and natural disasters, along with numerous other everyday incidents both large and small. The ability to maintain dependable, prioritized communications across jurisdictions and disciplines has strengthened emergency response capabilities and saved many lives.

The New Jersey Career Fire Chiefs Association respectfully urges the Committee and Subcommittee to take prompt action to reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority. Doing so will reaffirm Congress's commitment to public safety and ensure that America's first responders continue to have the reliable and interoperable communications network they need to protect the communities they serve.

Sincerely,

William Eaton, President
New Jersey Career Fire Chiefs Association

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