



DEPARTMENT OF
**EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS,
PREPAREDNESS
AND RESPONSE**

STEPHEN M. WILLOUGHBY, Director
Emergency Management Coordinator

February 2, 2025

Congresswoman
Jennifer McClellan
11 S. 12th Street
Suite 401
Richmond, VA 23219
Phone: (804) 486-1840

Support for FirstNet Reauthorization and Public Safety Communications,

Dear Congresswoman McClellan,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Richmond to express our strong support for the FirstNet program and the timely reauthorization of the First Responder Network Authority.

We understand that the House Energy and Commerce Communications Subcommittee has an upcoming hearing regarding FirstNet. As a city that relies heavily on this network for Public Safety, we believe it is critical that Congress continues to support FirstNet's long-term success and stability.

FirstNet plays an essential role in helping our first responders communicate reliably during both daily operations and large-scale emergencies. In Richmond, FirstNet is used every day by public safety personnel to support law enforcement operations, fire and EMS response, and emergency management coordination. During major planned events, multi-agency operations, and periods of high network congestion, FirstNet has proven vital in ensuring responders maintain priority and preemption for mission-critical communications.



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Additionally, FirstNet has been a key component of our communications strategy during emergency incidents and special events where seamless coordination between partners is required. The reliability, resiliency, and priority access provided by FirstNet directly enhance responder safety and improve outcomes for the communities we serve.

Timely action on FirstNet reauthorization is a public safety priority. The continued operation and evolution of FirstNet is critical to Richmond's emergency readiness, as well as to the broader preparedness and response capabilities of the Commonwealth and the nation.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to support the reauthorization of the FirstNet Authority and to continue championing this program that has become indispensable to public safety communications.

Thank you for your continued leadership and support of first responders. Please feel free to contact me if you would like additional information or local perspectives on how FirstNet supports public safety operations in Richmond.

Respectfully,

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