



Black Mountain Police Department

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January 26, 2026

The Honorable Deb Fischer

Chair

Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media

United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján

Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media

United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

RE: Support for FirstNet Reauthorization

Dear Chair Fischer and Ranking Member Luján:

Black Mountain Police Department strongly supports the reauthorization of FirstNet consistent with the original statutory framework established by Congress in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. We do not support changes to the governance or management oversight structure created in that legislation.

For police chiefs, fire chiefs, and public safety executives nationwide, FirstNet is not an abstract policy concept. It is a daily operational system that supports incident command, responder safety, coordinated response, and disaster operations. Its success is directly attributable to Congress's decision to vest governance authority in an independent entity with strong public safety representation.

That structure reflects a deliberate legislative determination that public safety practitioners are best positioned to guide the development, investment, and operational priorities of a nationwide public safety broadband network. Modifying this framework risks weakening public safety's voice and undermining the stability that mission critical communications require.

Existing law already provides appropriate accountability and transparency, including independent annual audits conducted by the Department of Commerce. When audit findings are identified and communicated, corrective actions are implemented that strengthen and improve the program. This balanced oversight model distinguishes FirstNet and helps ensure its continued success.

FirstNet is widely recognized as one of the most successful public private partnerships ever established by Congress and has achieved this success without additional taxpayer appropriations beyond those originally authorized. Any consideration of changes to governance or oversight should occur only through a formal reauthorization process that preserves Congress's original intent and meaningfully engages the public safety community.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's leadership and continued commitment to America's first responders.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven R Parker

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Police Chief

Black Mountain Police Department

Honor ~ Integrity ~ Professionalism ~ Excellence ~ Service ~ Dedication ~ Respect