



The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Chairman
House Committee on
Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
House Committee on
Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20510

RE: First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) – Support for Reauthorization and Sunset Removal

Dear Senators Cruz and Cantwell, and Representatives Guthrie and Pallone:

On behalf of the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA), the New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs (NHAFC) and New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police (NHACP), we respectfully urge the U.S. Congress to reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) by removing the sunset provision currently set to take effect in February 2027 under the Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. Without Congressional action, FirstNet's statutory authority will expire in February 2027, placing a vital public safety asset at risk.

NHMA, NHAFC, and NHACP are nonprofit, nonpartisan, voluntary-membership organizations representing local government members. NHMA represents the interests of all 234 towns and cities in New Hampshire. NHAFC represents the interests of New Hampshire's fire services to ensure that local fire departments have the proper resources to carry out their functions. NHACP represents the interests of New Hampshire's law enforcement community in ensuring that local police departments have the proper resources to help ensure the public's safety. Our organizations agree that ensuring the availability of reliable, interoperable communications for local emergency response is essential.

FirstNet was established in response to the communications challenges experienced during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Since then, it has become an indispensable tool for local

governments and their public safety agencies. The nationwide broadband network provides first responders with priority and preemption capabilities during emergencies.

In New Hampshire, where our communities range from small rural towns to larger urban centers, reliable emergency communications are fundamental to public safety and disaster response. FirstNet's expansion into underserved and remote areas has helped fill longstanding gaps in coverage, allowing local responders to communicate and coordinate across jurisdictions when it matters most. Municipal leaders throughout the state value the stability and performance that FirstNet brings to law enforcement, fire services, and EMS.

Significantly, FirstNet was built through a public-private partnership model that not only ensured operational accountability but also leveraged existing infrastructure to expand coverage in hard-to-reach areas. New Hampshire municipalities have benefited from this approach, particularly in regions where broadband coverage had previously been unreliable. Continued expansion in underserved areas supports not only public safety but also community resilience and economic vitality.

Additionally, FirstNet operates under a governance structure that includes oversight by the FirstNet Board and input from the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC), ensuring that the voices of local public safety professionals are heard. NHMA and NHAFC support preserving this structure.

Allowing FirstNet's statutory authority to expire in 2027 would introduce uncertainty into local planning, funding, and technology deployment decisions. A clean reauthorization that simply removes the sunset clause would give municipalities the long-term confidence needed to invest in compatible systems, develop applications, and train personnel who depend on uninterrupted access to secure broadband communications.

We respectfully urge the U.S. Congress to take timely action to remove the sunset provision and permanently re-authorize the continued operation of the First Responder Network Authority. Doing so will sustain a vital component of our national public safety communications infrastructure and support the ongoing needs of New Hampshire's municipalities and their emergency services.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and supporting the communications needs of our first responders.

Sincerely,

Margaret Byrnes
Executive Director
NH Municipal Association

Chief James Watkins
President
NH Association of Fire Chiefs

Chief Timothy Crowley
President
NH Association of Police Chiefs

cc: New Hampshire's Federal Delegation