



New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association
153 Magnolia Avenue, Dumont, NJ 07628



December 29, 2025

Dear

This organization, *The New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association*, is writing to express our support for the removal of the sunset date for the FirstNet Authority. As you are probably already aware, the FirstNet Authority manages and oversees the nationwide public safety broadband network, which is the only nationwide telecommunications broadband network built exclusively for public safety. Our group represents career Deputy and Battalion Chiefs throughout the state of New Jersey. We are also affiliated with other fire service organizations nationwide.

Our members utilize the products and services that FirstNet provides to help save lives and property. As upper-level managers, we represent fire departments and EMS services that respond to all types of emergencies – fires in residential and commercial complexes, structural collapses, hazardous material incidents, shipboard fires, commuter rail accidents and terrorist related incidents. As such, many of these events require a response from multiple agencies on a regional basis, otherwise called Mutual Aid. The record shows responses to residential apartment complexes, high-rise buildings, commercial airplane and helicopter crashes in the Hudson River, and a fire aboard a commercial container ship in the Port of Newark, which resulted in the death of two Newark firefighters. On a large-scale response, as many as a dozen or more agencies must coordinate their actions and communications to affect a satisfactory outcome. It is imperative that the lifesaving work of the FirstNet Authority last long into the future so that public safety response agencies can communicate with each – it is a matter protecting the lives of both civilians and uniformed personnel.

The idea of a nationwide public safety broadband network was born out of a recommendation from the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (“The 9/11 Commission”). On the day of America’s worst ever terrorist attack, many heroic first responders lost their lives due to not being able to communicate with one another. The lessons learned from that horrific day should never be forgotten.

An Association of Battalion & Deputy Chief Officers
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Since the release of the 9/11 Commission report, our organizations and associations have advocated for a network that ensures dedicated, prioritized, and reliable connectivity for all first responders: whenever and wherever they need it.

Since the creation of the FirstNet Authority, this program has helped front-line public safety personnel respond to numerous events affecting the everyday lives of American citizens. From large concerts, sporting events, and presidential inaugurations to hurricanes, wildfires, and other natural disasters, FirstNet has enabled critical connections among public safety personnel who have responded to calls for help. For example, FirstNet connected New Orleans responders when a terrorist stole the lives of innocent people in the French Quarter this past New Year's Eve. It also enabled coordination among the 30 public safety agencies from multiple jurisdictions that responded when a commercial airliner and military helicopter collided in Washington, DC earlier this year. Public safety is committed to ensure continuation of FirstNet and an ability to respond effectively with the right resources, at the right time, in the right way to protect the homeland.

Within the law that created the FirstNet Authority lies a sunset provision. This sunset creates a very uncertain future for the national public safety broadband network and all the advances made in public safety communications since the FirstNet Authority was established. In February 2022, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report, [Public-Safety Broadband Network: Congressional Action Required to Ensure Network Continuity \(GAO-22-104915\)](#). This report found that if Congress does not act, the continued operation of the national public safety broadband network would be jeopardized and could result in significant disruption for first responders who rely on the network for emergency responses. This is unacceptable and we need the help of Congress to pass legislation during the 119th Congress to ensure this does not happen.

Sincerely;

Charles Lind

Charles Lind
President, NJDFCA

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