



CAREER FIRE CHIEFS Of NEW YORK STATE

Established 1992



May 21, 2025

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

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

RE: Eliminate the FirstNet Sunset Provision

Dear Senator Cruz, Senator Cantwell, Representative Guthrie, and Representative Pallone:

As leaders of New York's career fire service, we write to express our strong concern over the statutory sunset of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) scheduled for February 2027. We respectfully urge Congress to eliminate the sunset clause and ensure that FirstNet remains a permanent and dependable part of the nation's public safety infrastructure.

FirstNet was established by Congress in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 as a result of the 9/11 Commission's findings that public safety needed an interoperable nationwide broadband network. Congress, in a bi-partisan manner, heard and answered this call by establishing FirstNet.

Career fire departments in New York respond to a wide range of emergencies: fires, rescues; EMS calls; hazardous materials incidents; mass casualty events; and more. Regardless of the call, we rely on immediate and uninterrupted communications. FirstNet is the only wireless broadband network built specifically to meet that need, and it delivers.

President- Chief Jason Green, Dewitt
Secretary- Chief Wayne Friedman, Cortland

Vice President- Chief James Seymour, Peekskill
Treasurer- Chief Howard Reiss, Fairview



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Unlike commercial networks, FirstNet provides first responders with priority and preemption during periods of high network demand, ensuring their communications are successfully transmitting and received. That capability is not a convenience, it is a critical life-safety function. The ability to transmit real-time data, video, and voice communications without delay is imperative.

New York's fire service operates in some of the most complex response environments in the nation. From high-rise fires in urban centers to mutual aid deployments in remote regions, we require seamless interoperability across jurisdictions and agencies. FirstNet has strengthened that capability while also expanding coverage into rural and underserved areas that have long faced communication gaps.

Since its inception, FirstNet has earned the trust of the fire service, law enforcement, and EMS. Today, it supports approximately 7 million connections across 30,000 public safety agencies nationwide. That level of adoption reflects both its operational value and the public safety community's confidence in its performance.

Allowing FirstNet's authority to expire would introduce unacceptable uncertainty into emergency communications planning. Public safety leaders need assurance that this mission-critical network will remain available, not just year to year, but for the long term.

We urge Congress to act without delay to remove the sunset provision and secure the future of FirstNet for the fire service and all emergency responders across the country.

Thank you for your leadership and continued support of public safety.

Sincerely,

Jason Green
President, New York Career Fire Chiefs

cc: New York Congressional Delegation

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