

July 24, 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: Reauthorization of FirstNet

Dear Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, Chairman Guthrie, and Ranking Member Pallone:

The Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, representing all 39 municipalities in the Ocean State, writes to express its support for congressional reauthorization of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) by eliminating the 2027 sunset provision contained in the Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012.

FirstNet has provided Rhode Island's local governments with a dependable and secure broadband platform built for emergency response. As a statewide alliance of municipal leaders, we know that consistent, interoperable communications are the backbone of effective public safety and emergency coordination whether the incident is a coastal storm, mass gathering, or local infrastructure failure.

The creation of FirstNet in 2012 addressed one of the most critical gaps identified in the 9/11 Commission Report: the inability of first responders to communicate across jurisdictions during large-scale emergencies. Since then, FirstNet has grown to support more than 30,000 public safety agencies and 7 million users nationwide. In Rhode Island, municipal police, fire, and EMS personnel have adopted the platform and rely on it for daily operations as well as large-scale incidents.

FirstNet's statutory commitment to rural and underserved areas has particular relevance here in Rhode Island, where small coastal and inland towns must maintain readiness for weather events, power outages, and transportation disruptions. FirstNet provides these communities with the communications continuity they need to prepare, respond, and recover.

The current sunset date creates uncertainty for our member communities as they plan for long-term technology upgrades, and integration of FirstNet-compatible equipment. Municipalities benefit from policy stability. Congress can ensure that stability by removing the 2027 sunset and affirming the long-term availability of the network.



We thank you for your consideration and your commitment to ensuring that local governments have the tools they need to serve their communities with professionalism and preparedness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

cc: Rhode Island Congressional Delegation