



Alaska Search and Rescue Association

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Office of Legislative Counsel
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Legislative Counsel,

I am writing on behalf of the Alaska Search and Rescue Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the volunteer organizations that perform critical search and rescue efforts throughout the state of Alaska. We strongly support the effort to reauthorize the FirstNet Authority, which is essential to the effectiveness of search and rescue operations in our vast and challenging environment.

Search and rescue teams in Alaska face extreme and often unpredictable conditions, including rugged terrain, harsh weather, and remote locations. Reliable communication is the backbone of successful search and rescue missions, enabling volunteers to coordinate quickly, access critical information, and respond efficiently. FirstNet's dedicated and priority network is vital to ensuring these teams maintain constant connectivity during emergencies and life-saving operations.

FirstNet's role extends beyond just communication; it enhances disaster preparedness and community resilience by supporting timely responses during wildfires, avalanches, severe storms, and other crises. For volunteer search and rescue organizations, having access to a robust, reliable, and interoperable network means improved coordination and safety for both rescuers and those in need.

The reauthorization of the FirstNet Authority will sustain this invaluable infrastructure and facilitate technological advancements necessary to meet Alaska's unique geographical and operational challenges. We urge Senator Dan Sullivan to support the effort to reauthorize the FirstNet Authority to ensure volunteer search and rescue teams across the state continue to have the tools they need to protect lives and support their communities.

Thank you for your attention and support.

Sincerely,

Manch Garhart
Board of Directors - CLO
Alaska Search and Rescue Association