



Providing benefits and services to America's state troopers since 1989

July 23, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz, Chairman
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Senate, and Transportation
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Senate, and Transportation
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of the American Association of State Troopers (AAST), I write to express our strong support for legislation to reauthorize the FirstNet Authority. AAST represents thousands of active and retired state troopers, highway patrol officers, and state police officers who serve on the front lines of public safety in every region of the country. Ensuring these officers have the tools and resources necessary to protect the public and respond effectively to emergencies remains one of our highest priorities.

Our members serve across vast geographic areas, often operating in remote locations with limited infrastructure while coordinating with local, state, federal, and tribal partners. They are frequently among the first responders to major incidents requiring coordination across jurisdictions. In these environments, FirstNet provides the prioritized communications necessary for responding jurisdictions and expanded coverage our members rely on to connect responding personnel and the communities they serve.

Additionally, FirstNet's priority and preemption capabilities help ensure AAST members can access the critical information and operational tools during emergencies and large-scale incidents, even when network demand is at its highest. This capability advances key priorities for our organization, including officer safety and operations readiness.

For these reasons, AAST urges support and timely passage of FirstNet Authority reauthorization legislation, that preserves the public safety-focused framework Congress established when it created FirstNet. By continuing this successful program, Congress will provide continuity for the governance model that ensures first responders maintain a meaningful voice in the network's future development and priorities.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation and for your continued commitment to public safety. Being able to connect with your colleagues in an emergency cannot be overstated. Our officers need access to real-time information as soon as it's available, not later. FirstNet helps make sure units stay connected, no matter where they operate. The FirstNet Authority and the underlying network



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technologies follow that ethos and are getting better at it every single day. That's why we ask that you help keep this vital program alive without any interruptions to its mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John J. Bagnardi".

Major John J. Bagnardi, Ret.
Executive Director
American Association of State Troopers