November 9, 2026

VIA Priority Mail

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Deb Fischer
Chairman, Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

SUBJECT: Safer Buildings Coalition Statement on FirstNet Authority Reauthorization

Dear Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, Chairman Fischer, and Ranking Member Luján:

The Safer Buildings Coalition urges Congress to reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) before its statutory authority expires in February 2027. FirstNet is a remarkable public policy success story, and the more than 32,000 public safety agencies now relying on this dedicated network deserve the predictability and certainty that reauthorization provides.

FirstNet's success speaks for itself. Public safety agencies have adopted FirstNet in unprecedented numbers, demonstrating their confidence in the network. The system operates with a self-sustaining business model requiring no ongoing taxpayer appropriations. It completed its initial buildout on time and on budget, and has proven its reliability during wildfires, hurricanes, earthquakes, and daily emergency operations nationwide. FirstNet continuously reinvests program-generated funds back into network improvements and innovation.

The Safer Buildings Coalition is dedicated to improving life safety in buildings through enhanced in-building wireless communications for public safety. We particularly commend the FirstNet Authority's strategic focus on in-building coverage, consistently identified by first responders as a top priority. The call for in-building coverage came directly from the public safety community through the Authority's roadmap process, which sets out its investment priorities in collaboration with first responders. Indoor locations such as basements, stairwells, and parking garages present challenging environments for wireless connectivity, yet these are precisely where first responders must operate during emergencies.

The September 11 attacks tragically demonstrated the life-or-death consequences of communications failures inside buildings.

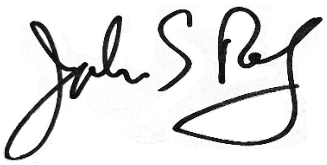
FirstNet has responded with substantial action. In May 2022, the FirstNet Authority Board approved major investments to expand in-building coverage in police headquarters, fire stations, emergency communication centers, and other critical locations. As of December 2025, the FirstNet Authority had invested in the deployment of more than 14,000 miniature cell sites that strengthen coverage inside public safety facilities, at no cost to the public safety agencies that use them. In March 2026, the Department of Commerce reached an agreement under the FirstNet contract that added $2 billion in value for public safety, and the FirstNet Authority Board named in-building coverage among the intended uses of those funds. The FirstNet Authority has stated that it will continue to invest in solutions that improve indoor coverage.

We stand with America's public safety community. APCO International, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and numerous other public safety organizations have called for reauthorization. First responders who depend on FirstNet during emergencies deserve certainty and uninterrupted access to this dedicated broadband network.

The uncertainty created by an approaching sunset date imposes unnecessary planning burdens on the 32,000+ agencies that depend on FirstNet. Every month of delay creates risk. The House passed H.R. 7386 by voice vote on April 20, 2026, and the matter is now before the Senate. Whatever legislative vehicle Congress uses, we urge Congress to act before the February 2027 sunset so that the FirstNet Authority's statutory authority does not lapse, and to provide the certainty that America's first responders have earned and deserve.

The Safer Buildings Coalition stands ready to support the FirstNet Authority's continued evolution and to contribute our expertise to ensuring that first responders can communicate reliably wherever their mission takes them—including inside the buildings where Americans live, work, and seek shelter during emergencies.

Respectfully submitted,



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