

SUPPORT THE DEPLOYMENT OF NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1 ACT

ACTION NEEDED:

Urge your Members of Congress to reintroduce and pass into law the Next Generation 9-1-1 Act of 2023 to modernize and improve interoperability to emergency communications. Introduced as H.R. 1784 and S. 4207 in the 118th Congress by Reps. Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.) and Richard Hudson (R-N.C.) and Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), this legislation would establish Next Generation 9-1-1 Implementation Grants and would vastly improve interoperability with regards to all emergency communications systems. This bill would also establish a Next Generation 9-1-1 cybersecurity center to coordinate with state, local and regional governments to detect and prevent cybersecurity intrusions related to Next Generation 9-1-1.

BACKGROUND:

Upgrades to our nation's emergency communications systems are urgently needed to move our 9-1-1 call centers and data center technology into the digital age. Most 9-1-1 systems were originally created using analog technology, and a modernization effort is needed to both recognize and improve the work of our emergency personnel in providing critical services to our communities.

The transformation of our nation's emergency communications systems to a digital or Internet Protocol (IP)-based 9-1-1 system, commonly referred to as Next Generation 9-1-1, will improve emergency services delivery in several ways. For example, the implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 will enhance emergency number services to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 9-1-1 network.

Implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 legislation would ensure the following principles are met:

- Ensure interoperability, reliability, resiliency and the use of commonly accepted standards
- Incorporate cybersecurity tools, including intrusion detection and prevention measures

COUNTIES PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE EFFORTS. FROM 9-1-1 CALL CENTER OPERATORS TO COUNTY IT PROFESSIONALS, COUNTIES HAVE VESTED INTEREST IN ENSURING OUR EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS ARE BROUGHT UP TO SPEED IN THE DIGITAL AGE

COUNTIES WOULD VASTLY BENEFIT FROM FEDERAL ASSISTANCE DESIGNED TO BRING MODERNIZATION AND IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY CAPABILITIES TO THE NATION'S EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

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2025 POLICY BRIEF

- Enables emergency communications centers to process, analyze, and store multimedia, data and other information

In efforts to reauthorize the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) spectrum auction authority, both the U.S. House and Senate considered several, larger telecommunications packages in the previous Congress that included Next Generation 9-1-1. In April 2024, U.S. Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Chair Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) introduced the Spectrum and National Security Act (S. 4049), which would restore FCC's spectrum auction authority and direct auction proceeds for Next Generation 9-1-1 grants. Similarly, the Spectrum Auction Reauthorization Act of 2023 (H.R. 3565), introduced by U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.) and Ranking Member Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) would also establish Next Generation 9-1-1 grants funded by proceeds from reauthorized FCC spectrum auctions. Both proposals provide a clear funding source for Next Generation 9-1-1 through the spectrum auction process.

The 119th Congress could consider incorporating the Deployment of Next Generation 9-1-1 Act into a proposal to extend the FCC's spectrum auction authorities and fund the program through proceeds, or Congress could seek to fund the program through the annual appropriations process, should the FCC's spectrum authority not be renewed or be renewed with auction proceeds dedicated to other purposes.

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- The time is now to upgrade our nation's emergency communications systems and empower both state and local governments with the tools to update our emergency response networks and improve services to communities.
- Interoperability is the key to the future of our telecommunications and technology infrastructure, and Next Generation 9-1-1 is our first step in ensuring the nation's emergency communications system does not fall behind.

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