



June 22, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
 Chairman
 U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
 Science and Transportation
 United States House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the national organizations representing the nation’s fire, emergency medical services, law enforcement, public safety communications, emergency managers and the state and local governments that support them, we request that you act on and swiftly pass legislation to preserve the federal First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). FirstNet provides mission-critical communications, so that local public safety officers can protect and provide lifesaving assistance to their citizens. The Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN) unequivocally saves lives, but its operations are at risk as its statutory sunset date quickly approaches.

FirstNet continues to help public safety fill the gaps when it comes to our high-priority communications. Before, during, and after such events like terrorist attacks and natural disasters, FirstNet has the plans and operations in place to serve America’s public safety community. Most importantly, FirstNet provides ruthless preemption, which ensures that public safety stays connected in times of crisis. FirstNet’s standalone core ensures that public safety has pre-determined separate lines of communication that are always on and always prioritized. FirstNet’s laboratory in Boulder, Colorado, provides testing to its devices to ensure they are interoperable and able to connect to the network. FirstNet provides public safety with services that no one else can.

On May 12, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its annual “Duplication and Cost Savings” report. This report identifies hundreds of billions of dollars of potential savings for the federal government. It also addresses outstanding critical policy reforms that -- if enacted -- would save money for the American taxpayers. The report highlighted the need to protect the federal FirstNet Authority: “Congress should consider reauthorizing FirstNet—including different options for its placement—and ensure key statutory and contract responsibilities are addressed before current authorities sunset in 2027. Potential financial benefits are \$15 billion over 15 years”¹. It is our hope that Congress will listen to the GAO and work quickly to preserve FirstNet.

The House passed the First Responder Network Authority Act (H.R. 7386) on April 20. The bill would ensure that the FirstNet Authority continues to operate until September 30, 2037. It also would increase the number of active public safety representatives on the FirstNet Board by two for a total of five members. The bill also would delineate FirstNet’s responsibility for managing emergency operations; setting budget and reinvestment decisions; and managing the device and application ecosystem. H.R. 7386 was voted out of committee on a bipartisan 51-0 vote, and it passed the House floor via voice vote without vocal opposition.

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks, we should not forget the lives of the brave fire, EMS, and law enforcement officers we lost that day due to communications lapses present during the response to the World Trade Center. The work to ensure interoperable and resilient public safety operations is not done, and the FirstNet Authority is tasked with helping us to achieve this goal. As groups representing the end users who use FirstNet to save lives, we look forward to working with you in a collaborative and constructive manner. We hope you will give serious consideration to H.R. 7386 as you formulate your plan to preserve the federal FirstNet Authority.

Sincerely,

International Association of Fire Chiefs
Congressional Fire Services Institute
International Association of Emergency Managers, U.S. Council
International Association of Fire Fighters

¹ United States Government Accountability Office, 2026 Annual Report, Opportunities to Reduce Duplication, Overlap, and Fragmentation and Achieve an Additional One Hundred Billion Dollars or More in Future Financial Benefits, 22.

International City/County Management Association
Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association
National Association of Black Law Enforcement Executives
National Association of Counties
National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians
National Association of State Chief Information Officers
National Association of State Foresters
National Association of State Legislatures
National Emergency Management Association
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
National Fire Protection Association
National League of Cities
National Volunteer Fire Council

cc: The Honorable Deb Fischer, Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation, Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation, Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media

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