

National Emergency Number Association
The Voice of 9-1-1



October 13, 2005

The Honorable Richard C Shelby
Chairman
Subcommittee on Science, Commerce,
Justice and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
S-146A
United States Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Science, Commerce,
Justice and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
SD-144
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Mikulski,

As you prepare for the conference of the FY'06 Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations bill, I urge you to support the request of the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus co-chairs in ensuring that the \$5 million that is included in the Senate bill to fund the ENHANCE 911 Act (PL 108-494) be included in the final bill.

Robust, effective and available 9-1-1 technologies and systems are of paramount importance for our homeland security as well as everyday emergency preparedness. While most areas in the United States have basic 9-1-1 service, there are still many communities operating without it. Over 350 counties still do not have enhanced 9-1-1 (automatic location information and a call back number) for their landline telephone service. Additionally, only fifty percent of the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), covering just over half of the population in the United States, have the necessary technology to locate wireless 9-1-1 callers. A major reason for these limitations is simply due to a lack of funding.

Congress recognized the needs of today's 9-1-1 system by passing the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004. Sponsored by the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus and signed into law by President Bush on December 23, 2004 the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004 authorizes the creation of a national 9-1-1 program office and the facilitation of up to \$250 million per year for grants to upgrade enhanced emergency communications services.

With the advent of technologies like voice over IP, the 9-1-1 community will continue to be presented with new challenges as well. Our goal must be to equip PSAPs with the best technology available, enabling them to provide the service that citizens have come to expect when they dial 9-1-1. Providing funding for the ENHANCE 911 Act is a critical step needed to meet this goal.

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter. Please feel free to contact me or my staff with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Jones", is positioned above the typed name and title.

David Jones
President

cc: Subcommittee on Science, Commerce, Justice and Related Agencies Members