

March 21, 2020

The Honorable Frank Pallone
2125 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
2322-A Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Walden,

On behalf of the undersigned public safety groups, we write to update you on our progress regarding Next Generation 911. Last week at a meeting convened by public safety, we were able to develop consensus regarding the need for a nationwide upgrade to our critical 911 infrastructure. Our groups discussed a united path forward, identified common policy interests, and began to work through issues that require discussion.

As public safety leaders, we are aware of current legislative efforts and the potential opportunity to act on NG911. H.R. 2670, the *Next Generation 9-1-1 Act of 2019* contains many provisions the public safety community supports. However, to ensure the upgrade meets the needs of the communities we serve, and to ensure good stewardship of the taxpayers' investment, the undersigned public safety organizations recommend the following issues to be addressed in the bill:

- Ensure adoption of open standards that do not lead to proprietary solutions which would hamper interoperability of NG911 systems
- Inclusion of adequate funding for initial NG911 implementation training nationwide
- Include incentives for increased efficiency of public safety answering points without mandate
- Ensure an efficient federal process for allocation of funds to localities while minimizing overhead and avoiding unrelated or extraneous grant conditions
- Ensure a holistic approach to cybersecurity
- Establishment of an advisory board of relevant public safety representatives to inform the development of program requirements, grant guidance, application criteria, and rules related to NG911 grants.

As has repeatedly been demonstrated in daily public safety operations and in the response to events such as natural disasters, mass casualty attacks and even the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, effective public safety communications are essential to protecting the health and safety of communities and our officers.

Rest assured, we are collectively working on draft legislative language related to the above-mentioned points and other items. It is critical to get this right for the American people and we understand the need to act quickly and responsibly. In the coming days, we look forward to productive conversations with you and your staff. Thank you for your continued commitment to public safety.

Respectfully,

Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO)
International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)
Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)
Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA)
Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association (MFCA)
National Association of State 911 Administrators (NASNA)
National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO)
National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)