



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



March 21, 2025

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

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives

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

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives

RE: Reauthorization of First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet)

Dear Mr. Cruz, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Guthrie, and Mr. Pallone:

As a coalition of bipartisan membership organizations representing state legislatures, state chief information officers, mayors, cities, and counties, we write to express our support for the reauthorization of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). We urge Congress to permanently reauthorize FirstNet before its authorization sunsets in February 2027. FirstNet is a public policy triumph, providing broadband connections to over 27,000 state and local public safety agencies throughout the nation. It is critical that Congress act on legislation to eliminate the sunset clause for the agency in order to ensure that state and local first responders continue to have access to the interoperable, nationwide broadband communication network they fought so hard to secure.

The establishment of FirstNet was a direct response to the communication failures experienced during the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Since its inception, FirstNet has been indispensable in ensuring that our first responders have access to a nationwide, interoperable broadband network. This network is critical for providing first responders with the cost-effective connectivity they need to deliver effective public safety services. Without Congressional action, this program will expire in 2027, leaving first responders without the high-speed broadband network they need.

In addition, FirstNet has demonstrated its commitment by investing billions of dollars in federal funding to expanding rural broadband coverage, as required by Congress in the Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act. By leveraging existing infrastructure and prioritizing rural and underserved areas, FirstNet has significantly enhanced public safety connectivity for these communities.

Currently, FirstNet has over 6 million first responder subscribers across more than 27,000 public safety agencies. This extensive adoption is a testament to FirstNet's success in meeting first responder's need for high quality wireless broadband services. From natural disasters to human-caused emergencies, FirstNet has consistently demonstrated its capability to support our first responders in their mission to protect and serve our communities.

The reauthorization of FirstNet is critical to ensuring that our first responders continue to have access to this essential communication tool. We urge Congress to act swiftly to remove the sunset date for the FirstNet Authority, thereby guaranteeing the continuation of this system for years to come.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your support in reauthorizing FirstNet and ensuring the continued success of this invaluable program.

Sincerely,




Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The United States Conference
of Mayors



Clarence Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities



Matthew D. Chase
Executive Director/CEO
National Association of Counties



Tim Storey
Executive Director
National Conference of State
Legislatures



Doug Robinson
Executive Director
National Association of Chief
Information Officers



Julia Novak
CEO/Executive Director
International City/County
Management Association

Cc: The United States House of Representatives
The United States Senate