



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

1620 EYE STREET, NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006
TELEPHONE (202) 293-7330
FAX (202) 293-2352
TDD (202) 293-9445
URL: www.usmayors.org/uscm

November 28, 2011

The Honorable Henry Waxman, Ranking
Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Members Waxman and Eshoo:

I write on behalf of the nation's mayors to register our strong support for your efforts to establish a nationwide public safety communications network. You listened to the strong concerns which public safety and local and state government officials had with the plan to auction off the D Block to the highest bidder for commercial applications. Your legislation, the Wireless Innovation and Public Safety Act of 2011, would ensure that our nation's first responders are able to access a broadband network capable of providing reliable high speed data and voice applications so that they can meet current and future public safety needs.

Your bill would ensure the deployment of a nationwide public safety interoperable broadband network in the 700 MHz band in both rural and urban areas, and it would ensure that the nationwide public safety broadband network be fully interoperable on a nationwide basis. It would reallocate and integrate the 700 MHz D block spectrum for use by public safety entities. It would establish a Public Safety Broadband Corporation, which includes representation of local and state government and public safety on its governing board, to ensure the establishment of a nationwide, interoperable public safety broadband network. It would authorize the auction of other portions of the spectrum, and use a portion of the proceeds of those auctions to provide \$250 million to local and state government for planning and implementing the network and \$11 billion to the Corporation for the construction, management, maintenance and operation of the network.

We must express concern, however, with a provision in the bill which is troubling to local governments. Section 213, which has to do with modifications to existing wireless towers, represents an unwarranted federal intrusion into local and state zoning authority. It would compel approval of modifications even when there are real concerns about the safety of the structure in question. We find your approach preferable to that included in other bills, however, since it would limit the provision to modifications that have to do with the construction, management, maintenance, or operation of the public safety broadband network.

All Americans deserve to be able to live in communities that are safe and secure, and effective communications among police, fire, and other first responders are essential to this. We look forward to working with you to secure the D Block for America's first responders and support the development of a nationwide public safety broadband network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Cochran".

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director