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

Dear Sir and Madam:

On behalf of the 19,000 cities and towns represented by the National League of Cities (NLC), I wish to offer our support for your legislation, the Wireless Innovation and Public Safety Act of 2011, and thank you for your efforts to establish a nationwide public safety communications network.

The Wireless Innovation and Public Safety Act of 2011 would ensure that America’s first responders are able to access a broadband network capable of providing reliable high speed data and voice transmissions. By authorizing the reallocation of the 700 MHz D Block of spectrum to public safety, this legislation will provide the means to build an interoperable communications network that has sufficient capacity to allow real-time information sharing between our first responders in every American city and town. The legislation also will provide a revenue stream for construction and development, ensuring a truly nationwide network where no community is left behind.

A dedicated broadband network that has intergovernmental management and oversight, as outlined in your bill, is the only feasible way to ensure our first responders receive what they have been promised for almost two decades—secure nationwide interoperability that is available during an emergency. If Congress fails to pass this legislation, our nation’s first responders will be trapped in the current patchwork of public safety communications systems, where neighboring jurisdictions—and often, local emergency personnel with overlapping jurisdictions—cannot communicate with one another or share information effectively.

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The Honorable Anna Eshoo
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NLC looks forward to working with you to enact the Wireless Innovation and Public Safety Act of 2011 and ensuring we finally develop a nationwide interoperable public safety communications network that guarantees first responders receive the information they need when lives are at risk.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald J. Borut". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Donald J. Borut
Executive Director

