A resolution recognizing the value of FirstNet to first responder communications

and supporting its reauthorization

Offered by:

International Association of Fire Chiefs

WHEREAS, FirstNet was established at the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission Report after the tragedies of September 11 revealed fundamental problems with communication systems used by our nation's first responders;

WHEREAS, the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act (P.L. 112–96) allocated $7 billion and 20 megahertz of broadband spectrum to establish a national broadband network for first responders and created the FirstNet Authority;

WHEREAS, in the years since the FirstNet Authority has been a game changer in public safety communications and excelled at addressing the public safety communications problems identified by the 9/11 Commission;

WHEREAS, FirstNet's creation of a national public safety broadband network has given first responders priority and preemption on their own spectrum and allowed multiple agencies to communicate within and across jurisdictions;

WHEREAS, as of November 2021, there were approximately 2.8 million device connections and about 18,000 public-safety agencies using FirstNet;

WHEREAS, FirstNet's network has vastly improved public safety communications at numerous major disasters where communications networks would have historically been overwhelmed, including the Surfside condominium collapse, wildland fires and hurricanes;

WHEREAS, first responders use the network to enhance situational awareness, ensure coordinated response across multiple jurisdictions; securely share and exchange mission critical information; and power apps and devices that deliver actionable data:

WHEREAS, P.L. 112-96 contains a 2027 sunset date for FirstNet and without Congressional action the FirstNet Authority will cease overseeing the national broadband public-safety network;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Congressional Fire Services Institute supports H.R. 6768 to reauthorize the FirstNet Authority and remove its sunset date.