



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS RESOLUTION

Resolution Title: Protecting Access to 911

Resolution Description: Telephone service providers and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) are examining the feasibility of transitioning from the nation's "copper" landline telephone network. The nation's communications networks are shifting from the legacy copper networks to fiber, coaxial cable, and wireless networks using Internet Protocol (IP)-based technologies to carry voice, data and video.

The FCC has demonstrated a commitment to fiber, coaxial cable, and wireless networks that meet or exceed the capabilities of current Universal-access telephone service for purposes of quick reporting of fire and medical emergencies, and for continued communications during severe weather and natural disasters. Technology evolves but the need to stay connected to emergency services remains. As the industry and consumers migrate away from traditional copper telephones to newer technologies, it is critical that the FCC continue to focus on this commitment. The FCC must ensure that the services Americans rely on to reach first responders are resilient, and that they have reliable access to communications services when they need it most – whether it's during a natural disaster, a power outage or a life-threatening emergency. The resolution addresses the issues surrounding the ability of individuals to reach 911 and be assured that they will be able to connect to 911 with new technologies that meet or exceed the operating standards of landline-based Universal Service.

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WHEREAS, telephone service providers and the FCC are examining the feasibility of transitioning the nation's current universal-service landline telephone network to fiber, coaxial cable, and wireless networks using IP-based technologies to carry voice, data, and video; and

WHEREAS, the FCC has proposed regulations to ensure that the transition to this IP-based world does not betray core values of the Communications Act—public safety, consumer protection, and competition—and the FCC recognizes that, while the benefits of next-generation fiber networks and that maintaining two separate networks would be burdensome for carriers, it also seeks to balance this transition against the needs of all Americans for a 911 access system that meets or exceeds today's universal-service landline telephone network capabilities services; and

WHEREAS, the FCC has demonstrated its commitment to 911 access capabilities that meet recently issued an order on wireless 911 location accuracy technologies used to ensure that individuals who call from a smartphone or other wireless handset can be found in an indoor location, and has set up a process to test technologies (e.g. Bluetooth, Wi-Fi) to see if they are usable technologies to locate individuals calling from an indoor location.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the IAFC urges the FCC to continue to ensure that 911 access via fiber, coaxial cable, and wireless networks are resilient, robust and provide reliable access to communications services when most needed-whether its during a natural disaster, a power outage or a life threatening emergency. The FCC needs to ensure that as new technologies evolve that they provide reasonable access to 911 to individuals during loss of electrical power to a residence or other customer location regardless of the cause. In enabling new technologies for 911, the standard of performance should be reliability that is at least equivalent to the current universal access landline telephone network.