



National Public Safety Telecommunications Week



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SENATOR WEBB HONORS PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS

April 4, 2007, Washington, DC – Senator Jim Webb (D – VA) today released a statement honoring the work of public safety communications professionals. The statement comes just days before the kick-off of National Public Safety Telecommunications Week, a week set aside by Congress and celebrated by the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) to pay tribute the work public safety communications professionals.

“I commend 9-1-1 public safety communicators for the important job they perform on a daily basis,” said Senator Webb. “These first responders play a vital role in ensuring that all Americans have the resources they need in times of emergency. As National Public Safety Telecommunications Week approaches, I would like to thank our 9-1-1 communicators for their dedication and tireless service.”

Designating a specific week to honor public safety telecommunicators was first conceived in 1981 by a member of APCO International’s Northern California Chapter. APCO International introduced the week to Congress in October 1991. According to congressional procedure, it was introduced twice more – in 1993 and 1994 – before becoming permanent without the need for yearly introduction. National Public Safety Telecommunications Week is the second full week of April each year and is dedicated to public safety telecommunicators who aid in providing emergency assistance to citizens everywhere.

APCO International and NENA kicked off this year’s festivities with a Press Conference and Communications Center Tour today at the Fairfax County Department of Public Safety Communications in Annandale, Va. The purpose of the event was to bring public attention to National Public Safety Telecommunications Week and the important work of public safety communications professionals.

“Across the nation in times of intense personal crisis and community-wide disasters, the first access point for those seeking all classes of emergency services and homeland security information is 9-1-1,” APCO International President Wanda McCarley said. “The local and county public safety communications centers that receive these calls have emerged as the first and single point of contact for persons seeking immediate relief during an emergency as well as those seeking to report suspicious behaviors, unusual incidents and responding to the now common plea for citizen vigilance and attention in the wake of homeland security concerns nationwide.”

"The demands on 9-1-1 telecommunicators continue to grow with rapid advancements in technology and increasing homeland security threats," said NENA President Jason Barbour, ENP. "Yet 9-1-1 professionals remain dedicated to their calling and are always there to provide a calm and reassuring voice on the other end of a call for help, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It is truly an honor to be associated with this group."

About APCO International

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International is the world's oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to the enhancement of public safety communications. APCO International serves the professional needs of its 15,000 members worldwide by creating a platform for setting professional standards, addressing professional issues and providing education, products and services for people who manage, operate, maintain and supply the communications systems used by police, fire and emergency medical dispatch agencies throughout the world. For more information, visit www.apcointl.org.

About NENA

NENA is The Voice of 9-1-1™. Now celebrating its 25th year, NENA was established to promote implementation and awareness of 9-1-1 as North America's universal emergency number. NENA has grown to become the leading professional non-profit organization dedicated solely to 9-1-1 emergency communications issues. NENA serves its more than 7,000 members in 47 chapters across the U.S., Canada and Mexico through policy advocacy, establishment of technical and operational standards, certification programs and a broad spectrum of educational offerings. Find out more at www.nena.org.

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