



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

DANIEL INOUE, Chairman

TED STEVENS, Vice Chairman

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STEVENS CALLS FOR IMPROVED E9-1-1 SERVICES FOR RURAL AMERICA

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), Vice Chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, today called for improved E9-1-1 services for rural America during a Commerce Committee hearing on **Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and the future of 9-1-1 services.**

“Upgrades to our nation’s 9-1-1 network are critical, but we will fail if rural America is left behind. As new wireless and IP based services are rolled out in Alaska, 911 capability must be included,” said Senator Stevens. **“The Senate recently secured \$43.5 million for grants to improve our country’s 9-1-1 capability in the September 11th Commission bill, and I urge members of the House to agree to this provision in the final Conference report.”**

Last month the Senate approved an amendment sponsored by Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) to upgrade the 9-1-1 system used to reach operators in an emergency. The amendment was originally introduced as a standalone bill (S. 93) and was added to S. 4, the Improving America’s Security by Implementing Unfinished Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, which passed the Senate. The measure expedites funding for new 9-1-1 upgrades across the nation using money that Congress has already allocated and would fund the grant program established under the “Ensuring Needed Help Arrives Near Callers Employing 911 (ENHANCE) Act” which was signed into law in 2004. The reconciliation bill of 2005 made \$43.5 million available from the auction of TV spectrum now scheduled for 2008. This bill will make those funds available to public safety groups immediately. The funds will be replaced after the auction is held, which is expected to be later this year.

Senator Stevens was recently named as Co-Chair of the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus. The Caucus works closely with the public safety community, communications industry, and citizens to ensure that the best technology is available for emergency communications and that call centers and emergency networks are adequately funded. Established in 2002, the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus is made up of more than 50 members from both the House and Senate and seeks to raise public awareness on the importance of the country’s 9-1-1 emergency system, and to improve the availability of E9-1-1 services throughout the nation. Senator Stevens joined Caucus Co-Chairs Senator Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.), Congressman John Shimkus (R-Ill.), and Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.).