

NEWS RELEASE

from the office of

CONGRESSMAN JOHN SHIMKUS

website: www.house.gov/shimkus

e-mail: steven.tomaszewski@mail.house.gov

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Contact: Steven Tomaszewski
618/344-3065; 618/322-9246

PRESIDENT SIGNS SHIMKUS' 911 BILL INTO LAW

Washington, DC.....Congressman John Shimkus (R, Illinois-19) attended a bill signing ceremony at the White House today for legislation on which he was the primary Republican cosponsor.

"My first piece of legislation signed into law by President Clinton was one that designated 911 the emergency number for cell phones," Shimkus explained. "We teach our children to dial 911 in emergency situations, yet that wasn't the case then for cell phones, and it isn't the case now for Internet-based telephones.

"This new law requires Internet voice service companies to provide 911 service to their subscribers."

President Bush signed into law the New and Emerging Technologies 911 Improvement Act (HR 3403). In addition to mandating 911 for voice over Internet companies, the bill allows 911 fees to be collected from customers of these companies; authorizes customer information to be shared with other telecommunication carriers for emergency services; and allows grants to public service answering centers to be able to receive these 911 calls.

"Unfortunately, a three month old girl in Florida may have lost her life three years ago because the family's telephone would not go through to 911," Shimkus noted. "This really is a law that could save a life."

Shimkus is one of the four co-chairs of the Congressional E-911 Caucus along with Congresswoman Anna Eshoo of California and Senators Hilary Clinton of New York and Ted Stevens of Alaska. He also is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet.

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