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June 14, 2011

Dear Senator Snowe,

The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association (MFCA) board of directors is comprised of one county representative from each of the sixteen counties and an executive board. The county representatives are selected by each county organization. Our Association includes chiefs from all-volunteer towns through the career chiefs of our largest cities. Our purpose is to encourage professional development and provide quality training for Fire Service Leaders throughout the State of Maine.

The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association urges you to cosponsor S. 911, the Strengthening Public-safety and Enhancing communications Through Reform, Utilization, and Modernization Act (SPECTRUM) Act. This bill will ensure that public safety organizations have the necessary spectrum to develop an nationwide public safety interoperable wireless broadband network.

This will give the fire service of America the opportunity to take advantage of broadband and provide us with the newest technology to greatly enhance public safety communications. Some examples of the enhancement is devices to track firefighters inside burning buildings; allow smart buildings to broadcast information about a fire to a fire chief's cell phone; allow paramedics to share a patient's vitals remotely with medical staff at a hospital; and much more.

Currently, public safety has been licensed 10 MHz of spectrum to develop a nationwide public safety wireless broadband system. There is another block of 10 MHz of spectrum (the "D Block") adjacent of public safety's broadband spectrum. S.911 would allocate the D Block to public safety which could then work with the private sector to develop a nationwide public safety interoperable wireless broadband network using 20 MHz of spectrum. Unfortunately, current law directs the Federal Communications Commission to auction the D Block to a commercial bidder.

S. 911 will prevent the auction of the D Block, and instead allocate it directly to public safety to build out its nationwide wireless broadband network. Considering that there is a shortage of spectrum, S. 911 presents public safety with its only opportunity to obtain the critical spectrum that it needs to bring cutting-edge technology to America's firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical personnel.



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The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association urges you to cosponsor S. 911, so that public safety can develop a nationwide public safety interoperable wireless broadband network to more effectively protect the American public. This is a one-time only opportunity to get it right. Your help is essential.

Sincerely,

Chief Jeffrey Cammack
Maine Fire Chiefs' Association