



Allen County Emergency Communications Center



January 31, 2019

Kansas House Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee
Chairman Joe Seiwert
Kansas State Capitol, RM 481-W
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear House Utilities Committee Members:

I am writing today to encourage your support of House Bill 2084 that will be submitted in the 2019 Legislative Session, amending the Kansas 9-1-1 Act. I hope that you will agree our citizens **are** worth an additional \$5.16 a year. The proposed changes contained in this bill will improve 9-1-1 service for all residents of the State of Kansas.

One of the major changes proposed in the bill is an increase of the 9-1-1 user fee from the current \$.60 per device to \$1.03. Of this increase, \$.20 would come directly to our Emergency Communications Center (ECC) for fiscal support of operations, while \$.23 would support the statewide, Next Generation 9-1-1 system.

This is a much-needed increase from an existing surcharge to ensure all 9-1-1 systems continue to operate flawlessly. In the last two decades, the capabilities of consumer technology have advanced significantly. Funding models have not evolved as quickly though, leaving 911 systems with challenges in continuing to fund our systems. Many states are increasing user fees to *modernize an antiquated system*, meanwhile Kansas has already taken the lead by providing a necessary statewide platform that delivers much better accuracy in routing calls to the appropriate PSAP, vastly increased location information, and built in redundancy. Kansan's deserve this level of accuracy and sustaining this system falls into a fundamental purpose of government, which is protecting public safety.

Due to the varying needs of 9-1-1 jurisdictions across the state and differing levels of 9-1-1 service capabilities, the 9-1-1 centers can't sustain infrastructure let alone look for enhancements because the current funding mechanism is not enough to support 9-1-1 capital expenditures and daily operating cost therefore endangering the integrity of the communications systems.

There **is** a significant danger in tying the future of the 9-1-1 system to our current budget. Allen County receives \$78,000 a year in 9-1-1 user fees. Basic essentials for a 9-1-1 Center are

astronomical. Allen County's population is 13,300 which is relatively small yet some of our cost include:

- Maintaining telephone service (not NG) = \$30,000 a year
- NG and E9-1-1 = \$55,000 a year
- Annual CAD Maintenance = \$10,000
- Computer contracts = \$13,000 a year
- Implementing Emergency Medical Dispatch so that call takers can offer prearrival instructions to patients = \$30,000
- Implementing Emergency Fire Dispatch so that call takers can safeguard callers until help arrives = \$27,000
- Voice Recorder to capture evidence for prosecutors = \$40,000

Our 9-1-1 call centers are the first point of contact for emergencies, it is critical to be able to provide timely emergency information to our citizens.

User fees help to provide training of staff on the use of E9-1-1 and NG9-1-1 technologies, acquainting staff with new technology or operational procedures within the PSAP, procurement of E9-1-1 training classes that help ensure the residents of Kansas continue to have the best 9-1-1 service possible and that public safety for Kansas is all it can be, define operational, organization procedures, and processes established for E9-1-1 and NG9-1-1 call taking, improve location determination technologies, and enhance infrastructure.

Our ask for an additional \$.43 seems modest compared to the national average of \$1.20 per user. This seems to be a small price to ensure that 9-1-1 service maximizes the protection of life and property for every Kansan.

This legal crusade needs your support so that changes can be made to the Kansas 9-1-1 Act resulting in a commitment to making sure all communities across Kansas can achieve the highest level of safety.

I respectfully ask that you give favorable review of House Bill 2084. The additional funding will pay great dividends for all of Kansas and ensure our citizens the best chance at a quality life for the next decade and hopefully beyond.

Please contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Angela Murphy



Allen County Emergency Communications & Emergency Management