



North Carolina APCO and NENA Joint Legislative Notification



Dear NENA and/or APCO Member:

This document is provided jointly as a means of keeping you current on legislative issues that directly impact every PSAP in our state. For several months, representatives of our associations served on a study group that drafted a Statewide 9-1-1 Plan. While many of their recommendations were brought forward to the Legislature, some were not. Overall, the current legislative initiative is good, because among other things it calls for the creation of basic standards and authorizes the 9-1-1 Board to procure a network for Next Generation 9-1-1. There are sections of this proposed law (HB 1691), however, that the leadership of both NC APCO and NC NENA find troublesome. The following is a synopsis of key points in our unified position:

- We support the expansion of eligible expenditures to “include all equipment within the PSAP walls.” While this may require some refinement, it is clear that chairs and 100% of consoles would now be eligible. This was identified as a priority goal by many of our members.
- We support the expansion of training expenditures to include all job categories (call taker, dispatcher, supervisor, director, GIS manager, etc.) involved in the delivery of 9-1-1 services, plus the addition of certain public education expenses. (Again, positive feedback came from our members regarding these approved uses.)
- We support the *one-time* transfer of up to 50% of an agency’s fund balance to their municipality’s general fund, provided that a hard sunset date is provided. We strongly recommend that public safety communications expenditures be given priority for purchase by these transferred funds as we feel that this is in closer alignment to requests made by numerous agencies to use 9-1-1 funds for radios and more compatible with the original intent of the collected funds.
- We DO NOT support continued use of 9-1-1 funds to secure towers and radios for first responders due to fund fluidity. The proposed lowering of the 9-1-1 fee from \$.70 to \$.60 per month coupled with the unknown, but assumed substantial cost of Next Generation implementation, suggests the need for fiscal conservatism. Keep in mind that for some period of time during the transition to Next Gen both legacy and NG networks and CPE will be active simultaneously. Additionally, we believe that there are other avenues and grants that can be used to fund radio purchases, while no comparable process is in place for PSAPs.
- We support the continued presence of both NENA and APCO on the 9-1-1 Board. Present proposals reduce NENA to a single seat. We believe that the current or an expanded presence provides needed first-hand guidance at a time when there are significant changes occurring. Further refinement of this position is currently underway.

A model letter which can be use to contact your legislators will be placed on the web. When requested, please initiate contact and have your voices heard. We cannot afford to remain silent on these issues.