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**Testimony to the Senate Ways and Means Committee
Supporting HB2556
March 19, 2018**

Chair McGinn and Committee Members,

The importance of interoperable communications across the state for our emergency services has been a quest since 9-11 and has been reemphasized as a critical need with many natural disasters since then. This cannot be achieved without the application of compatible technology in our radio systems. It is key to our ability to effectively communicate between our various public safety and first responder agencies both within our communities and across the state. We support a state coordination of those efforts and have participated in the existing State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC). It is our understanding the State Interoperability Advisory Committee proposed in Substitute HB2556 will replace the SIEC under statutory authority rather than under the current authority of Executive Order 07-27.

Our associations provided neutral testimony in the House Government, Technology and Security Committee to point out concerns with the original HB2556. The House committee modified the bill with a Substitute Bill which was ultimately passed by the House 96-25. The substitute bill, which you have before you today, addresses all the concerns we presented to the House Committee.

We support Substitute HB2556 and encourage the committee to move it forward favorably.

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