

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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WILLIAM J. JOHNSON  
Executive Director

May 19, 2011

The Honorable John Rockefeller  
United States Senate  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Rockefeller:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing 241,000 rank-and-file police officers from across the United States, I would like to thank and commend you for your work on the deployment of a nationwide public safety interoperable broadband network.

The allocation of the D block will be interoperable, meaning law enforcement officers would be able to communicate with firefighters on the public safety spectrum. While this interoperability is a step in the right direction, it does not go far enough to protect our nation from catastrophic events such as 9/11. Therefore, NAPO believes legislation should require interoperability across the 700 megahertz bandclasses.

The importance of this is twofold. First, without interoperability across multiple bandclasses, if the public safety network does go down then first responders will be left without the necessary equipment to communicate.

Second, having a public safety spectrum interoperable with just itself will cause the cost of the equipment needed to operate for law enforcement, firefighters and other responders to be astronomically expensive. With interoperability across bandclasses, the cost of equipment for first responders is reduced from \$3,000 a device to \$500 a device. *See*, September 1, 2010 report by the Congressional Research Service, "Public Safety Communications and Spectrum Resources: Policy Issues for Congress" (Report Number: R40859).

There is no added cost to public safety or the taxpayers for making the D Block interoperable with other bandclasses. It would be irresponsible to advance legislation that requires smaller municipalities to shoulder the cost of operating equipment or to rely on the federal government to cover these costs.

NAPO has been working with several offices on the Hill to address this issue. NAPO respectfully urges you to incorporate language that addresses interoperability across bandclasses into the final bill. If you have any questions on how NAPO can support your efforts, please feel free to contact me, or NAPO's Director of Government Affairs, Rachel Hedge, at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William J. Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William J. Johnson  
Executive Director

cc: Senate Commerce Committee