



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

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CONTACT: Tim Richardson  
(202) 547-8189

## House Committee Clears FirstNet Reauthorization, Does Not Address Officer and Public Safety Concerns

**Washington, DC** - Patrick Yoes, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, expressed concern at the news that the House Energy and Commerce Committee favorably reported H.R. 7386, the “First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act,” to the House floor today. The bill, which would reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) through 2037, also contains provisions that will hinder FirstNet’s primary objectives and introduce uncertainties that will jeopardize emergency operations, community protection, as well as officer and public safety.

“It is unfortunate,” Yoes said. “FirstNet is an indispensable, nationwide public safety communications network trusted by public safety for its proven reliability and resiliency. It is insulated from short-term commercial, bureaucratic, and political pressures, making it highly accountable to the public safety community it serves. We are very concerned that the provisions in the bill passed by the Energy and Commerce Committee today will compromise officer safety and the safety of the public.”

Law enforcement organizations like the National Fraternal Order of Police and the International Association of Chiefs of Police called on Congress to pass a “clean” reauthorization bill—one that does not erect bureaucratic barriers to FirstNet’s vital role in protecting officer and public safety—by changing FirstNet’s governance. The intent of Congress in establishing FirstNet was to create an authority with public safety expertise at its core—it was deliberately designed to prevent mission drift and ensure the network remains focused on law enforcement and emergency responder operational requirements. The provisions in the current bill jeopardize what has been the key to FirstNet’s success—regular engagement with public safety users to ensure that operational realities inform network management and investment decisions.

“This is about officer safety—the safety of the men and women who protect the public. Shifting decision-making authority away from public safety professionals and placing it in the hands of bureaucrats could revive old weaknesses, marginalize frontline input, and delay vital choices, especially at a point in time where potential tragedies of great magnitude are a genuine concern,” Yoes said. “We risk reintroducing the very coordination failures exposed during the attacks of September 11, 2001—failures that led directly to the creation of FirstNet.”

The legislation now heads to the House floor for further action.

“The Senate has not yet drafted its reauthorization bill,” Yoes noted. “So, we are hopeful that we can renew our dialogue with House and Senate leadership to reauthorize this vital program without compromising its operational integrity by introducing unnecessary bureaucracy to a program with a track record of tremendous success in saving lives.

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*Founded in 1915, the Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement organization in the United States, with more than 382,000 members. With national offices in Nashville, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C., the FOP is*

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