

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities  
Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations,  
Public Works, and Telecommunications

**FROM:** David Callender, Government Affairs Associate *DC*

**DATE:** March 5, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Support for Senate Bill 566 and Assembly Bill 779, Relating to Funding  
for 911 Systems

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) supports Senate Bill 566 (SB 566) and Assembly Bill 779 (AB 779) and thanks Senator Leibham and Representative Tittl for sponsoring the bills. WCA also thanks the Committees for holding this joint hearing today.

SB 566 and AB 779 eliminate the Police and Fire Protection Fee of 75 cents a month on all devices capable of dialing 911, as well as another fee of up to 40 cents per month on all landline telephones. Instead of those two fees, the bills establish a flat fee of 40 cents a month on any device that can dial 911. The fee will be used to fund a statewide contract administered by the Public Service Commission to provide both landline and wireless lines into county 911 centers, and fund a grant program to help counties pay for equipment and training. Most significantly, the bills use general purpose revenue to replace the roughly \$54 million annually the Police and Fire Protection Fee contributes to county and municipal shared revenue. These bills offer the state a way to fund local 911 system training and equipment while maintaining other vital county and municipal services.

For the past several years, WCA has been working with lawmakers and the telecommunications industry to develop a sustainable system for funding improvements to local 911 systems. Senate Bill 566 and Assembly Bill 779 represent a major step toward that goal.

Currently, county 911 services are funded through two sources: a surcharge of up to 40 cents on all landline telephones and the county tax levy. Telecommunications providers collect the surcharge, known as the landline fee, as part of a service agreement with each

county. The surcharge is used to pay the cost of providing landline telephone lines into the 911 center, officially known as a public safety answering point, or PSAP.

As the number of landline phones has declined, so too have revenues from the landline fee. In several counties, the landline fee no longer covers the cost of providing telephone lines to the county PSAP, so the counties must pay the difference from property taxes. In Sauk County, taxpayers must now pay about \$100,000 annually to cover the gap, while in Walworth County taxpayers pay about \$70,000.

Other costs related to 911 service, such as wireless phone lines into the PSAP, as well as equipment, training and staffing, are also paid with county taxes. Taxpayers pay an estimated \$5 million annually for wireless lines alone statewide.

In 2009, WCA and telecommunications stakeholders proposed a permanent grant program to fund equipment and training costs for county 911 centers. The grants would have been funded by a monthly 911 fee of up to 75 cents on every landline phone line, cellular telephone and other device capable of dialing 911.

As part of its action on the 2009-11 state biennial budget, the Joint Committee on Finance approved the new 75 cent monthly fee and the grant program. However, before final adoption of the budget, lawmakers and the Governor redirected the 911 fee to fill an unexpected revenue gap. The 911 fee was renamed the Police and Fire Protection Fee, and proceeds were deposited to the line item for the county and municipal aid program, also known as shared revenue. The Police and Fire Protection Fee will generate roughly \$54 million in FY 13 and \$53 million FY 14.

Since 2009, WCA has sought to fund the shared revenue program with state general purpose revenues and to return the Police and Fire Protection Fee to its original purpose of funding grants for county 911 centers. SB 566 and AB 779 accomplish that goal. WCA has also sought ways to ensure long-term funding of services currently paid for with the landline fee as revenues from the fee have declined.

WCA supports SB 566 and AB 779 because they:

- Eliminate the Police and Fire Protection Fee and fully fund shared revenue with state general purpose revenue. Due to previous budget decisions, elimination of the 75 cent monthly fee without an equal commitment of GPR would mean an annual reduction of roughly \$54 million in aids to counties and municipalities. Funding 911 system improvements should not result in cuts to other programs that county and municipal residents depend upon.

- Eliminate the current patchwork of county contracts with telecommunications providers, widely varying landline fees, and county funding for telecommunications services to 911 centers. A statewide contract administered by the Public Service Commission would likely yield economies of scale and would take all of these costs off local residents.
- Provide a statewide grant program to help counties pay for equipment and training. In many counties, training and equipment purchases have been deferred or have come at the expense of cuts to other programs because of tight fiscal conditions. Currently, only a few county 911 centers offer callers the technology most cell phone users take for granted – such as texting and sharing pictures and video. Counties must invest in these and other new technologies in order to accommodate the needs of users.
- Encourage consolidation of multiple Public Safety Answering Points. The bills provide that only one PSAP per county, as designated by the county board, will be eligible for the new grants. This is the same language used to fund grants to counties to implement Enhanced 911 services between 2005 and 2008. Many counties have indicated that they would like to consolidate municipal 911 services but cannot do so because of the equipment and training costs involved.
- Reduce fees on all device users. The fees for landline customers would decline from a maximum of \$1.15 a month per landline (75 cents for the Police and Fire Protection Fee, plus up to 40 cents for the landline fee) and from 75 cents per cell phone (for the Police and Fire Protection Fee only) to a flat rate of 40 cents for each device capable of dialing 911.

WCA believes that SB 566 and AB 779 provide an opportunity to ensure a consistent, high level of 911 services to all Wisconsin residents. WCA respectfully requests the Committees approve their respective bills.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Please feel free to contact WCA for more information.



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To: Senate Committee on Government Operations, Public Works, and  
Telecommunications  
Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities

From: Curt Witynski, Assistant Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities

Date: March 5, 2013

Re: SB 566/AB 779, 911 Systems; Eliminating the Police and Fire Protection Fee

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities opposes SB 566/AB 779 for the following reasons:

1. The bill eliminates the police and fire protection fee (P&FP fee). The League is concerned about the long term ramifications of eliminating this important source of revenue for the shared revenue program. Revenue from the P&FP fee currently helps fund the state's shared revenue program. In 2013, the P&FP fee funded approximately \$54 million of the \$753 million distributed to cities, villages, towns and counties through the shared revenue program. In other words, 7.2 percent of the program is funded by the P&FP.

The state shared revenue program is a key component of Wisconsin's state and local relationship. It is also an important part of the state's overall program of property tax relief. Unfortunately, during the last ten years funding for the program was reduced three times to address state fiscal difficulties. Shared revenue payments to cities and villages were cut by \$57.6 million in 2004, by \$23 million in 2010, and by \$48 million in 2012.

The League fears that converting the P&FP fee to a 911 surcharge will cause further reductions in shared revenue. Up-to-date 911 systems do Wisconsin no good if there are not enough police and fire fighters to be dispatched.

2. The bill establishes a PSAP grant program to make grants to PSAPs for the improvement of 911 services. Under the bill, however, only one PSAP per county is eligible for the grant and the County Board specifies which PSAP is eligible. As a result, numerous municipal PSAPs would not be eligible for the grants created by this bill. Even consolidated municipal dispatch centers, such as the consolidated dispatch center for the seven north shore communities and the North Shore Fire Department, would likely not be eligible for any PSAP grants. The bill would adversely impact fiscally responsible consolidations such as the Bayside Communications Center.

We urge you to vote against recommending passage of SB 566/AB 779. Thanks for considering our comments.



Village of  
Germantown  
Willkommen

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E-mail: gtpd@germantownpolice.org

Peter G. Hoell  
Chief of Police

Senator Paul Farrow  
Chair Person: Committee on Government Operations,  
Public Works and Telecommunications  
Room 323 South  
State Capitol  
PO Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882

March 4, 2014

RE: Senate Bill 566 and AB779 "State 911 Telecommunications Services; Elimination of the Police and Fire Protection Fee"

Honorable Senator Paul Farrow:

I am writing to you regarding several concerns that I have with Senate Bill 566/AB779 in its current form.

The bill proposes the collection of a \$0.40 surcharge to all wireline and wireless phone subscribers to pay for hardware, software, and training for Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). Unfortunately those funds will be granted to only 72 of the approximately 150 PSAPs in Wisconsin. The bill would effectively make all police department PSAPs ineligible to receive any funding by having the county governments designate their sheriff's department as the only beneficiary of these monies. In Washington County alone there are three police departments, each with its own PSAP. These centers are supported by city and village residents who would actually pay these fees without the benefit of the improvements they are intended to provide.

One of the bill's stated objectives is promoting the "consolidation of P.S.A.P.'s". As you are well aware, maintaining public safety is the greatest responsibility a local government has. There is no one in a better position to identify and address a community's need than the local officials. On more than one occasion, the Village of Germantown has very carefully considered the advantages and disadvantages of a potential consolidation of our dispatch services with those of the Washington County Sheriff. After weighing options, expectations and level of service, each time the Village of Germantown has decided that maintaining our own dispatch center was in the best interest of our community. This promotion of consolidation is the foremost disagreement I have with this bill.

The bill proposes to establish a statewide "9-1-1-Advisory Council" to assist in the establishment of training standards in 9-1-1 dispatch services. I agree that standardized training and certification in the area of PSAP services is needed. It is my belief that these standards would be better addressed, implemented and regulated through the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Standards Board.

I urge you to oppose Senate Bill 566/AB779 in its current form. Any grant funding made available for the improvement of 9-1-1 services from the collection of these proposed fees should be made available to ALL PSAPs in the State. The city and village residents who pay these fees and support a local PSAP should also benefit from them.

I encourage you to support the decisions made by local governments, who represent more than half of the existing PSAPs in the state, who have chosen to maintain their own dispatch centers. Please oppose the needless hindrance to these communities simply because they have determined that it is in the best interest of their community to maintain their own PSAP.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter G. Hoell  
Chief of Police  
*Excellence In Police Service*



## Village of West Milwaukee Police Department



*Dennis L. Nasci*  
Chief of Police

March 5, 2014

Senate Government Public Work and Telecommunications Committee  
Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities

Dear Senators and Representatives,

After reviewing this bill and consulting with other members of the law enforcement community, I am very concerned with the proposed removal of the Police and Fire Protection Fund.

Many of our communities have endured cuts to the shared revenue fund year after year. With the proposed SB566 it appears we will endure yet another cut to shared revenue, if passed, by eliminating \$53 million in revenue. This proposed legislation will not only remove the Police and Fire Protection Fund, but eliminates the shared revenue that was paid from this fund.

The bill replaces the Police and Fire Protection Fund with a state wide 911 Emergency Telecommunications System Fund that will raise about \$30 million. Of that funding source only \$10 million will make its way to the county level in the form of a grant to one PSAP within the county each year. It completely removes the funding source the counties enjoy now so make your own conclusion where the grant money will go.

In the body of the bill it appears that by passing this law there is hopes that it will force many of the smaller PSAP's to consolidate the services as expressed in section 42(b)1 of the law. You may want to talk with some of the agencies who have given up there PSAP's and see how well that has been working. It may save money initially in the purchase of equipment but what you save there you lose tenfold in service to your community.

A state wide 911 emergency telecommunications system may be a great idea but are we simply replacing a system that is already in place and if so why are we going to spend money for a system that is in place now. I urge you to consider these few points and vote against this bill.

Sincerely

Chief Dennis Nasci



## Police Department

W75 N444 Wauwatosa Road • Cedarburg, Wisconsin 53012-2204  
(262) 375-7620 • Fax (262) 375-7624 • cpd@ci.cedarburg.wi.us

March 4, 2014

Dear Legislative Committee Members:

I would urge you to consider the pending Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) legislation to allow for funding of multiple 911 PSAPs within each county. There are many differences in services and training needed and/or desired throughout the State of Wisconsin and more specifically, within each County. What might be good for citizens and visitors in one area of Ozaukee County may not meet the needs of those in other areas of the County. The City of Cedarburg is a unique location with a vibrant downtown, historic buildings, popular festivals and a thriving tourist industry. Citizens feel connected to the community and expect a very high level of customer service from law enforcement. A recent ongoing study in Ozaukee County has no definitive answer as to the cost savings and possible loss of services.

The cost of 911 equipment has been dropping dramatically with the possibility of host PSAP equipment and tethers that branch off to secondary PSAPs. I ask you to consider funding this host/secondary PSAP configuration for any qualified, full-time emergency call taking center within each county. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Frank  
Chief of Police  
Cedarburg Police Department

TJF:alf



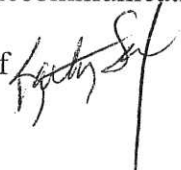
**KATHRYN A. SCHAUF**  
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

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Baraboo, Wisconsin 53913

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TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities  
Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Public  
Works, and Telecommunications

FROM: Kathryn Schauf 

DATE: March 5, 2014

SUBJECT: Support for Senate Bill 566 and Assembly Bill 779, Relating to Funding for 911  
Systems

Sauk County seconds Wisconsin Counties Association support for Senate Bill 566 (SB 566) and Assembly Bill 779 (AB 779). In 2013 the County spent \$77,810.30 and anticipates \$93,000 in 2014 to cover the gap in funding from landline fees. We also regularly anticipate \$50,000 in annual costs to maintain equipment and software.

The proposed bill addresses not only financial concerns to ensure adequate funding for a vital community resource, but also offers potential efficiencies in consolidating this service to obtain grant funding for ensuring state-of-the art equipment and solutions in addressing emergency service needs.

The statewide contract for administration by the Public Service Commission is clean, uncomplicated and offers economies of scale that cannot be realized at the local level.

Ensuring high quality, consistent service is job one for the State, the County and all local governments who partner to provide emergency services.





TO: Senate Government Operations, Public Works, and Telecommunications Committee  
Assembly Energy and Utilities Committee  
FROM: Nicole Hudzinski, American Heart Association  
DATE: March 5, 2014  
RE: Senate Bill 566, state 911 telecommunications services

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Good morning Senator Farrow, Representative Kuglitsch, and members of the committees. My name is Nicole Hudzinski and I am Government Relations Director in Wisconsin for the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 566.

Our interest in this legislation is simple— we strive, in every state, to ensure a strong chain of survival, and that all starts with 911. Far too many people die or are disabled from a STEMI heart attack, stroke, or sudden cardiac arrest because they didn't get the lifesaving treatment they need in time. Timely treatment can mean the difference between returning to work or becoming permanently disabled, living at home or in a nursing home. More importantly, it can be the difference between life and death.

Wisconsin's Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), and the dispatchers behind them, are the gateway to the emergency response system. Dispatchers assess the situation, triage the appropriate care, and provide pre-arrival instructions until help arrives. At least that's the way it's supposed to happen. Do you know how it works where you live?

Here in Wisconsin we do not have a statewide minimum training standard for 911 dispatchers. We have minimum training standards for the person who cuts your hair, but not the person who answers the phone when you call 9-1-1. The amount of training dispatchers receive varies from community to community, and we believe there should be a consistent level of training across all communities.

We also believe that all dispatchers should be trained to provide pre-arrival medical instructions, including CPR, until emergency responders arrive. In addition, we believe it is important for dispatchers to be trained to accurately assess the situation and ensure the appropriate emergency response teams are dispatched. Is it a potential STEMI, which requires a rig with 12-lead? Is the caller complaining of the worst headache ever, which came on suddenly? This signals a potential stroke and would call for a higher level of care and rapid response. Some dispatchers are trained to provide this level of service; others are not.

We have made great strides to ensure a strong 911 system in Wisconsin, however there is room for improvement. We need better statewide coordination, minimum training standards, and a stable funding source to support it all. I urge you to take steps to make sure the 911 system in our state is the best it can be. Lives depend on it. Please support Senate Bill 566 and I am happy to answer any questions you have.

*"Building healthier lives,  
free of cardiovascular  
diseases and stroke."*

Please remember the American Heart Association in your will.





## CITY of STURGEON BAY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Tim  
Herlache  
Fire Chief

421 Michigan St  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

920-746-2916  
920-746-2905 FAX  
Email:therlache@sturgeonbaywi.org

February 22, 2014

Door County Board Chairman Daniel Austad  
421 Nebraska Street  
Sturgeon Bay WI 54235

RE: Door County Resolution No. 2014-14

Dear Chairman Austad,

I have reviewed County Resolution No. 2014-14 in regards to Senate Bill 566 and am in full support. Over the past few years, Dispatch Centers have lost funding due to the reduction in landline phones which reduced shared revenue payments that dramatically impacted funding for the maintenance and upgrade to local 911 systems. The cost to maintain and upgrade these systems is a forever on going expense that has proven to put a financial burden on Counties, especially those with small communities such as ours. The importance of up to date, reliable 911 Centers is just as important to our residents, visitors and emergency responders as it is in the larger communities. A heart attack is a heart attack, a fire is a fire and a burglary is a burglary no matter where you live.

Senate Bill 566 may provide a funding source to help us upgrade and maintain our aging 911 system now and into the future through fee's imposed on all communication service connections, not just landline phones.

Please consider adoption of this resolution.

Respectfully,

Tim Herlache  
Fire Chief  
Sturgeon Bay

Resolution No 2014 - 01

In support of Senate Bill 566

State wide 9-1-1 Emergency Telecommunications System

To The Sister Bay & Liberty Grove Fire Board

**Whereas**, Under current law, county 9-1-1 emergency telecommunications systems are funded as follows: counties may levy charges, the so-called county option land line fee ( up to 40 cents); and the county levy (See: §§ 256.35(3) & (3m), Wis. Stats.); *and*

**Whereas**, The current method of funding 9-1-1 emergency telecommunications services is no longer viable due to the decline of the number of landline phones and the concurrent increase in demand for 9-1-1 services; *and*

**Whereas**, Senate Bill 566 relates to state 9-1-1 telecommunications services, and addresses, among other things, funding issues. This Bill does all of the following: a) eliminates the police and fire protection fee; b) requires state wide funding for a 9-1-1 emergency telecommunications system; c) requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to contract for the establishment and maintenance of such a system and reimburse communications providers for related costs; d) allows the PSC to make grants to public safety answering points (PSAPS) for the improvement of 9-1-1 services; e) creates a 16 member state 9-1-1 council; *and* f) includes other provision related to the foregoing; *and*

**Whereas**, the Door County Legislative Committee and the Door County Board of Supervisors has met, considered, and have voted unanimously in support of Senate Bill 566 . I am recommending that the Sister Bay & Liberty Grove Fire Board formally goes on record in support of Senate Bill 566.

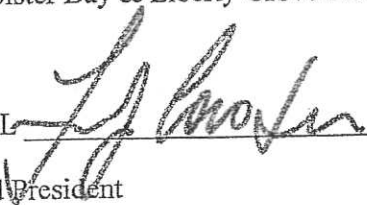
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sister Bay & Liberty Grove Fire Board does hereby express its support of Senate Bill 566.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** That a copy of this resolution shall be sent to Governor Walker, Representative Bies, Senator Lasee , and Door County Administrator Maureen Murphy

Respectfully Submitted Chris Hecht - Fire Chief

Sister Bay & Liberty Grove Fire Department

FIRE BOARD APPROVAL



Date

2/26/14

Lou Covotsos - Fire Board President



**DOOR COUNTY**

**Resolution No. 2014-14**

**In Support of Senate Bill 566  
Statewide 911 Emergency Telecommunications System**

**TO THE DOOR COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

ROLL CALL Board Members	Aye	Nay	Exc.
AUSTAD	X		
BRANN	X		
ENGLEBERT	X		
ENIGL	X		
FEUERSTEIN	X		
FISHER	X		
FONTAINE	X		
GUNNLAUGSSON	X		
HAINES	X		
KOHOUT			X
LIENAU	X		
MEYER	X		
MOELLER	X		
MULLIKEN	X		
NEINAS	X		
O'CONNOR	X		
RUNQUIST	X		
SCHULTZ	X		
VIRLEE	X		
WIEGAND	X		
ZIPPERER	X		
	20	0	1

**BOARD ACTION**  
Vote Required: Majority Vote of a Quorum

Motion to Approve Adopted

1st Schultz Defeated

2nd Wiegand

No: 0 Yes: 20 Exc: 1

Reviewed by: [Signature], Corp. Counsel

Reviewed by: [Signature] Administrator

**FISCAL IMPACT:** [Signature]

**Certification:**  
I, Jill M. Lau, Clerk of Door County, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution that was adopted on the 25th day of February, 2014 by the Door County Board of Supervisors.

[Signature]  
Jill M. Lau  
County Clerk, Door County

1 **WHEREAS,** Under current law, county 911 emergency  
2 telecommunications systems are funded as follows: counties may levy  
3 charges, the so-called county option landline fee (up to 40 cents); and the  
4 county levy (See: §§ 256.35(3) & (3m), Wis. Stats.); and  
5

6 **WHEREAS,** The current method of funding 911 emergency  
7 telecommunications services is no longer viable due to the decline of the  
8 number of landline phones and the concurrent increase in demand for  
9 911 services; and

10 **WHEREAS,** Senate Bill 566 relates to state 911 telecommunications  
11 services, and addresses, among other things, funding issues. This Bill  
12 does all of the following: a) eliminates the police and fire protection fee; b)  
13 requires statewide funding for a 911 emergency telecommunications  
14 system; c) requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to contract for  
15 the establishment and maintenance of such a system and reimburse  
16 communications providers for related costs; d) allows the PSC to make  
17 grants to public safety answering points (PSAPS) for the improvement of  
18 911 services; e) creates a 16-member state 911 council; and f) includes  
19 other provisions related to the foregoing; and  
20

21 **WHEREAS,** The Legislative Committee has met, considered, and is  
22 recommending that Door County formally goes on record in support of  
23 Senate Bill 566.  
24

25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** That the Door County Board  
26 of Supervisors does hereby express its support for Senate Bill 566.  
27

28 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** That a copy of this resolution be sent to  
29 Governor Walker, the Door County legislative delegation, all municipalities  
30 within Door County, all counties, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.  
31

**SUBMITTED BY: Legislative Committee**

[Signature] Susan Kohout, Chairman  
[Signature] Dale Wiegand  
[Signature] Kathy Schultz  
Kathy Schultz