



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

Senate Committee on Transportation, Veterans and Military Affairs Testimony on Senate Bill (SB) 465

Sen. Howard Marklein and Rep. Amy Loudenbeck

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the opportunity to testify in favor of Senate Bill (SB) 465, which allows the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) to create a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) grant program.

Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG-911) is an initiative aimed at updating the 9-1-1 service infrastructure in the United States and Canada to improve public emergency communications services in a wireless mobile society. In addition to 9-1-1 voice capabilities, NG-911 intends to enable the public to transmit text, images, video, and data to a 9-1-1 center.

NG911 Benefits include the following:

- System interoperability
- Improved response times and location data
- Enhanced data sharing between PSAPs
- Improved redundancy and reliability (with virtual PSAPs)
- Greater visibility within emergency incidents such as: video from public-safety systems, video and images from citizenry, and texts to and from citizenry
- Better service to citizens - particularly the deaf and hearing impaired community

There is significant work yet to be done to get all of Wisconsin's 9-1-1 system updated, and the technology involved in updating PSAPs is going to be expensive for local units of government. The 2019-2021 budget included funding, supported by the police and fire protection fund, to support ongoing costs for NG-911 implementation for the biennium. However, DMA and the Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) pointed out that additional funds would need to be requested during future budgets to implement the two other components of NG-911 – funding for PSAP equipment replacement and developing GIS data systems.

During the 2019-2021 budget process, DMA was in the process of conducting an assessment of statewide 911 capabilities in order to assist DMA and outside contractors with planning for a statewide, system-wide upgrade to NG-911 in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin 9-1-1 Telecommunications System Assessment Report was completed in mid-August and was submitted to the Wisconsin 9-1-1 Subcommittee and Interoperability Council.



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SB 465 will allow DMA to set up and make rules for a grant program for PSAPs to purchase, update, and maintain NG-911 equipment. DMA recently received a federal grant of \$3 million for this purpose. This bill is important because it gives DMA the ability to start the rule-making process for the grants, allowing the grant program to be additionally funded in the future as NG-911 becomes a reality in Wisconsin.

A key component of the grant criteria is that DMA may not award a grant to more than one PSAP per county. This will avoid duplicative efforts in counties with more than one PSAP. In addition, this criteria will ensure that as many counties as possible will be able to receive a grant.

It is important to note that SB 465 includes language directing the 911 Subcommittee to advise DMA on appropriate grant purposes and eligibility criteria for the grants. It also authorizes DMA to promulgate rules for grant use purposes and eligibility based on those recommendations. The 911 Subcommittee consists of 18 voting members and its mission is to advise and make recommendations to the Interoperability Council regarding minimum standards for public safety interoperable communications systems facilities, equipment used by dispatch centers, and certification criteria for persons who operate public safety interoperable communications systems for dispatch centers.

The companion legislation to SB 465, AB 471, passed the Assembly Committee on State Affairs 7-5 on October 1, 2019 and passed the Assembly on a voice vote on October 10, 2019.

Thank you for your kind attention to our testimony. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.



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To: Senate Committee on Transportation, Veteran, and Military Affairs
From: Curt Witynski, J.D., Deputy Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities
Date: October 22, 2019
Re: **SB 465, Establishing a Framework for Issuing Grants for Next Generation 911**

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities opposes SB 465 as drafted for the following reason: The bill expressly prohibits awarding next generation 911 grants to more than one PSAP per county. This prohibition precludes numerous municipal based PSAPS in populous counties from being eligible for a next generation 911 grant once the program is funded. We urge the authors and the committee to amend the bill by deleting lines 11-12 on page two, which state: "The department may not award a grant under subd. 1 to more than one public safety answering point per county."

While I understand the desire to encourage consolidation of PSAPs and avoid duplication of services, the reality is that there are only thirty to forty PSAPs in the state that are not operated by a county. Roughly 100-110 PSAPS to serve the entire state is efficient. Consolidation has occurred naturally over time where it makes sense. In counties like Dane and Milwaukee, multiple PSAPS are arguably necessary to affordably and efficiently dispatch emergency services considering the population covered.

Dane County has 9 separate and distinct PSAP's. The Dane County 911 Center is the largest, but State Capital Police, Wisconsin State Patrol, UW Madison, Stoughton, Monona, Sun Prairie, Fitchburg and Middleton have their own PSAP's.

Each of these local governments have weighed the pros and cons of consolidating with each other or the Dane County 911 Center and decided to maintain their own PSAP. Middleton, Sun Prairie, Monona, Verona and Fitchburg are in a shared records management consortium known as the Multijurisdictional Public Safety Information System (MPSIS). In 2011 MPSIS commissioned a study to determine if each community's PSAP should remain status quo, should combine with suburban PSAP's, or should close and have the Dane County 911 Center dispatch emergency services. For numerous reasons, each city independently decided to keep the status quo. They felt their individual PSAP's provided better service for their communities and public safety employees.

In Milwaukee County, there are eleven PSAPS. At one time there were 18. Many municipalities in Milwaukee County service themselves for a variety of reasons, including financial, service level concerns, technology investments, radio and software platforms, and political. Only 4 centers (Bayside Communications Center (BCC), City of Milwaukee, Franklin, and Milwaukee County) currently can answer wireless calls directly. The remaining dispatch centers have their

wireless calls answered by the County center and then transferred to the municipality. Milwaukee County primarily dispatches for the Milwaukee County sheriff's department.

The Bayside Communications Center is a consolidated dispatch center within Milwaukee County that services the Village of Bayside, River Hills, Shorewood, Whitefish Bay, Brown Deer and Fox Point as well as the City of Glendale and the joint North Shore Fire Department. The BCC answers both wired and wireless call services for over 65,000 residents within Milwaukee County.

Under the bill as written, the BCC and none of the other individual community PSAPs in populous counties would be eligible for a Next Generation 911 grant once the program is funded. We don't think this makes sense. All PSAPS need help in affording to upgrade their systems with the most up-to-date technology to quickly and efficiently respond to emergency calls. The League urges you to consider an amendment that keeps the door open for more than one PSAP per county being eligible for a next generation 911 grant.

Unless the bill is amended to remove the prohibition on awarding grants to more than one PSAP per county, we urge you to not recommend passage of SB 465. Thanks for considering our comments.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Veterans and Military Affairs

FROM: Marcie Rainbolt, Government Affairs Associate

DATE: October 22, 2019

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 465

Modernizing Wisconsin's 911 system has been a priority for counties and other stakeholders since the early 2000s. In the 2017-19 state budget, \$6.7 million was reallocated from the Police and Fire Protection Fund for the creation of an emergency services IP network (ESInet) which will allow Wisconsin to move towards a long overdue upgrade for 911. The 2019-21 budget allocated \$19.7 million in FY 2019-20 and has to be used before the conclusion of the current biennium. These funds will help ensure that the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is able to continue the progress of transitioning the state to Next Generation 911 (NG911) as the state is still handling 911 calls on 1960s technology.

This session, the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) has been advocating for the creation of a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) state grant program. Despite the state's involvement in funding the creation of an ESInet, only a limited number of counties will have the necessary equipment to utilize the new digital platform.

Wisconsin did receive a grant from the federal government in the amount of \$2.9 million with a 40% non-federal match requirement. According to the DMA this money will be prioritized for those PSAPs that have equipment at the end of life and not NG911 capable. The DMA plans to distribute the money per answering position in the amount of \$27,492 with a local match requirement of \$18,328.

This money alone is not enough to pay for the equipment needed and the ongoing updates to keep the equipment current. Price County in their last budget approved funding to update their PSAP which has two main stations and one backup call station. They have budgeted \$147,000 for the equipment and an additional \$191,000 for a 10-year service agreement on the maintenance, upgrades, and management of the equipment. In the 2020

SB 465
Page 2
October 22, 2019

budget for Price County, they have set aside an additional \$30,000 for the Capture 911 recording system.

As is evident, the one-time federal grant will not be sufficient to help the county PSAPs in this state purchase and maintain their NG911 equipment. WCA supports Senate Bill 465 and sincerely hopes the legislature will fund a grant program as soon as the grant application process is created by DMA.



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Director of Administration

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Director of Intergovernmental Relations

City of Milwaukee Informational Testimony on Senate Bill 465 relating to: grants for Next Generation 911 and granting rule-making authority

*Senate Committee on Transportation, Veterans and Military Affairs
October 22, 2019*

Good afternoon, Chairman Petrowski and members of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Veterans and Military Affairs. The City of Milwaukee is pleased to offer its input on Senate Bill 465 relating to: grants for Next Generation 911 and granting rule-making authority.

First, we want to thank Senator Marklein and Representative Loudenberg for tackling such an essential funding need experienced by local governments across the state.

The City of Milwaukee is here to provide background regarding current 9-1-1 practices as well as Next Generation 911 needs and posit some recommendations for the committee's consideration. The City also wants to ensure thorough public engagement opportunity during the Department of Military Affairs' 911 subcommittee process and any rulemaking that the legislature may direct to their jurisdiction. The City of Milwaukee does not have a designated spot on the 911 Subcommittee, and therefore we want to ensure our input - as the largest Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) in the state - is heard as part of this rulemaking process which will significantly impact future grant eligibility.

Given the unique and large-scale needs of a first-class city, the City of Milwaukee wants to ensure that the legislation would allow large-scale counties to receive funding for more than one PSAP.

Especially with the approach of the Democratic National Convention in July 2020, it is imperative that the region have adequate PSAP coverage to ensure timely responses to constituents needing urgent protective services. Adequate funding for the proportional needs of PSAPs will ensure locals and visitors alike have a safe experience in Milwaukee and invest their travel and tourism dollars here. Funding only one PSAP in the state's largest county may ultimately require cities to change our priority call structure through the standardization of dispatch procedures, leading to reduced levels of service and longer response times which could be a matter of life and death. Normally standardization is a desirable quality among intergovernmental services; however, given the large-scale and unique public safety needs of the City of Milwaukee, we ask the committee to consider local needs.

The City of Milwaukee alone spends nearly \$14 million to operate 9-1-1 annually and our 2018 capital budget included \$2 million to upgrade the current 9-1-1 system, clearly demonstrating the need to consider funding more than one PSAP in counties with a population of 500,000 or more.

Thank you for your consideration and we would be pleased to answer any questions.