



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
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Lt. Governor

April 29, 2015

Ms. Sara Clark,
Secretary and Paralegal Specialist
Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable
1000 Washington Street, Suite 820
Boston, Massachusetts 02118-6500

RE: D.T.C. 15-2, Petition of the State 911 Department to Adjust the Enhanced 911 Surcharge

Dear Ms. Clark:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide my strongest support of the Petition of the State 911 Department to Adjust the Enhanced 911 Surcharge.

As fully detailed in the Petition, the adjustment to the Enhanced 911 Surcharge is necessary in order for the State 911 Department to meet its statutory obligations and to continue to fulfill its responsibility to coordinate and effect the implementation of enhanced 911 service and to administer and support its programs, including disability access programs, in the Commonwealth.

Chapter 223 of the Acts of 2008 established the State 911 Department and requires that the State 911 Department coordinate enhanced 911 service throughout the Commonwealth. The stated purpose of the legislation is to further protect the public's safety by improving the Commonwealth's ability to coordinate and administer the enhanced 911 system and to ensure the most efficient and consistent approach for enhanced 911 service to all cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth.

Since its inception, the State 911 Department has met these statutory obligations while maintaining a stable surcharge at seventy-five (75) cents per month. The State 911 Department expenditures have provided maximum safety and value to the public, Public Safety Answering Points, and persons with disabilities, at a surcharge level that has been consistent with the Department of Telecommunication and Cable's long-established ratemaking goals of rate stability and continuity.

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The current enhanced 911 system now needs to be replaced with a new system. The Commonwealth does not have the option to continue to maintain the existing system or to upgrade the current equipment using the existing infrastructure. Accordingly, the Commonwealth has entered into a contract to procure a comprehensive, end-to-end, fully featured Next Generation 911 system to replace the current enhanced 911 system. The Next Generation 911 system will allow for additional data to be sent with a 911 call, including text to 911, a critical need for the deaf, hard of hearing, and speech impaired. The new system will enhance public safety to the benefit of the citizens of and visitors to the Commonwealth.

In addition to the projected costs of the Next Generation 911 system, the State 911 Department will need to support the maintenance of two systems for a period of time during the transition from the current enhanced 911 system to the new Next Generation 911 system. In order to fund these extraordinary expenses while maintaining the State 911 Department's programs at current levels, it is necessary to adjust the Enhanced 911 Surcharge.

The adjustment of the Enhanced 911 Surcharge is also necessary to allow for continued funding for local 911 services through the State 911 Department's extensive grant programs and will allow for enhanced promotion of regionalization of 911 services.

The requested surcharge adjustment to \$1.25 is for one year only to fund the implementation of the new Next Generation 911 equipment and systems. The Enhanced 911 Surcharge will then adjust downward to \$1.00 to fund the future annualized costs to maintain and support the Next Generation 911 systems and the programs administered by the State 911 Department, including support grants to our municipalities and incentives to regionalize 911 centers across the Commonwealth.

All of the State 911 Department's projected expenditures are prudently incurred expenses designed to fulfill the State 911 Department's statutory responsibility to coordinate and effect the implementation of enhanced 911 service, to administer such service in the Commonwealth, and to administer and support the disability access programs in the Commonwealth.

For all of the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request that the Department of Telecommunications and Cable approve the Petition of the State 911 Department to Adjust the Enhanced 911 Surcharge as soon as possible.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to address this important matter of public safety.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Bennett", written over a horizontal line.

Daniel Bennett
Secretary of Executive Office of Public Safety and Security