

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Implementing Public Safety Broadband Provisions of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, PS Docket No. 12-94; Implementing a Nationwide, Broadband, Interoperable Public Safety Network in the 700 MHz Band, PS Docket No. 06-229; Service Rules for the 698-746, 747-762 and 777-792 MHz Bands, WT Docket No. 06-150.*

Our efforts today are a small piece of something historic. History was made in last year's Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act. It was in this law that Congress came together and determined to right a long-standing wrong. More than a decade after the horror of 9/11 and many years after the watery devastation of Hurricane Katrina, Congress sought to help public safety officials across the country by doing something very simple—putting them all on the same airwaves. This facilitates interoperability, enhances functionality, and creates scale that over time could reduce the cost of first responder communications. But more than that, it means that those who wear the shield will be able to communicate better in crisis and make us more safe.

Congress sought to make all of this happen through the First Responder Network Authority—or FirstNet. Specifically, Congress charged FirstNet with the responsibility to help develop and operate a nationwide, interoperable, public safety wireless broadband network using spectrum in the 700 MHz band.

When FirstNet's board was first put in place fourteen months ago, they faced a steep climb. They had to stand up an organization from scratch. They had to build their efforts on essential input from public safety officials across the country. They had to consider how this network would be deployed in a way that is smart, cost effective, and consistent with congressional goals.

This is a bold undertaking. Getting it done will require grit, gumption, and moving beyond the conventional wisdom. But historic efforts usually do. And because progress sometimes occurs only in obscurity, I think it is worth itemizing the good work done to date.

First, the organization. FirstNet is now staffed by full-time employees. This includes a well-respected permanent management team with extensive experience in wireless networks, public safety communications, governmental outreach, and financial management. Plus, more help is on its way. The board recently approved a \$194 million budget that will be used for—among other things—additional hiring to support its work.

Second, the outreach. To make sure the voice of public safety is always heard, the FirstNet board established a Public Safety Advisory Committee. This committee is made up of 41 individuals from every segment of the public safety community—from state, local, and tribal entities to technology experts and security officials.

As part of its outreach efforts, the board has also acknowledged that the most important input is not from Washington. It is from those on the front lines. So from its very first day, FirstNet reached out to state and local public safety officials. It has held six regional workshops at which every state and virtually every territory participated.

Third, the network. FirstNet has been laying the foundation for the network it will develop through a series of public-private partnerships. Last year, the Commission helped move this effort along by establishing a board that developed minimum technical standards to ensure nationwide interoperability for the network.

But FirstNet has gone further. It has issued 11 requests for information, seeking industry input on wireless devices, network partnering and provisioning, antenna systems, satellite service, enhanced packet

core specifications, data centers, network operation centers and more. More importantly—industry has responded with 340 jam-packed filings dense with information FirstNet will consider as it proceeds.

Finally, some locations are beyond the planning stages and are already moving ahead. To this end, the board has approved spectrum leases with a major city, Los Angeles, and an entire state, New Mexico.

So what's next? That is where our decision today comes in. It is small but important. We respond to a call from FirstNet for consolidated service rules for their spectrum. Consolidated service rules make it possible to develop and certify new equipment for the public safety network. They establish the technical underpinnings for public safety communications to flourish in this band without disturbing their spectral neighbors. But it is just as important to note what these rules do not do. Our rules are streamlined. They do not layer on unnecessary requirements or duplicate build-out obligations already in the law. That is not what Congress asked us to do, that is not what we do here. Instead, we make decisions to help FirstNet get off the ground and get down to the business of improving public safety.