

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Wireless E911 Location Accuracy Requirements*, PS Docket No. 07-114

During my time at the Commission, I have made it a priority to visit public safety officials and talk about communications technologies where they work. So over the course of a year or so, I visited one 911 call center every month. That means I have seen public safety officials at work from Alaska to Arkansas, California to Colorado, Vermont to Virginia—and a whole lot of places in-between.

In every visit, I get the privilege of meeting emergency call operators and watching them work. They always amaze. Because when crises mount, they answer calls with steely calm and help ensure that help is on the way.

In every visit, I also hear one refrain: the number of wireless calls to 911 is skyrocketing. The data bear this out. Today, more than 70 percent of 911 calls are from wireless phones. That is more than 400,000 calls across the country every day. And this number is only going to grow. Today, for roughly 2 in 5 households, their wireless phone is their only phone. In some places, that number is even higher. In Idaho, for instance, more than half of all households no longer have a landline phone. In Mississippi, one half of adults live in wireless-only households. Closer to home, the numbers are similar right here for the District of Columbia.

The way we connect and call is changing. So is the way we reach out for help at our moment of greatest need. But our rules that provide first responders with information about where we are when we call 911 are stranded in calling practices of the last century.

So today, under our rules, if you call 911 from a wired phone, first responders know where you are and where to send help.

If you call 911 from a wireless phone outdoors, the Commission has standards that help ensure first responders can locate you and send assistance.

But if you call 911 from a wireless phone indoors, you should cross your fingers and hope and pray, because no location accuracy standards apply.

This is an unacceptable gap in our policies. But today we do something about it. On the heels of a hearing on this issue led by Senator Mark Pryor, we start a rulemaking to narrow this gap and fix this problem. He has been a champion on this issue and I thank him for it. To be sure, our proposals are aggressive. But I think we can fix this problem if all stakeholders work together. I am encouraged that carriers have told me they intend to work with public safety officials and the Commission to find technologies that work. For my part, I will be watching closely.

Finally, I want to note that this is important to me. I have traveled far and wide and witnessed this problem and I have spoken and written about it at length. So I am really pleased that the Chairman made it a priority to put it before the Commission and put it on the agenda today. I want to thank him for making public safety a priority. I look forward to working with my colleagues—and icons in the public safety community like Steve Souder—to improve our policies and make us all more safe. Because one thing is certain—when you call 911—you want first responders to find you.