

**REMARKS OF FCC CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI
AT THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BLUE ALERTS PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, DC

MAY 19, 2017

Thank you, General Panuccio.

Thanks as well to the members of the Blue Alert Advisory Group and all the law enforcement officers here today.

During Police Week, we pay tribute to the men and women in uniform who put themselves at risk every day to keep us safe. And today, the FCC is grateful for the chance to honor our friends in blue with action, not just words.

Let me take a moment to describe that action.

Many of you may recall watching TV or listening to the radio when the programming is disrupted by an alert about an impending risk, usually extreme weather. These alerts are delivered through the Emergency Alert System, or EAS. The EAS uses different codes to identify what type of alert is being sent to the public—an AMBER alert or flash flood, for instance. The FCC authorizes these codes to be used in connection with the EAS. But there's no EAS code addressing an imminent threat against law enforcement.

We're aiming to change that. I'm pleased to announce that yesterday, I formally proposed to my FCC colleagues that we authorize a new Blue Alert EAS event code. As General Panuccio just explained, Blue Alerts are an important tool to notify the public about imminent threats against law enforcement officers and to help apprehend dangerous suspects. My proposal would give state and local authorities the option to use a dedicated alert code to send these warnings to the public over broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline video networks.

My fellow Commissioners will vote on this proposal at our next monthly meeting on June 22. If it's approved, we'll then seek public input on whether the EAS is the right way to deliver Blue Alerts. We'll also explore whether a dedicated EAS code can enable the uniform, nationwide delivery of Blue Alerts to the public, as envisioned by the Blue Alert Act. We'll also ask whether Blue Alerts could be delivered through the complementary, but separate, Wireless Emergency Alert system, which delivers critical warnings and information to your mobile phone.

We know that some states have their own Blue Alert programs that use various methods to issue warnings. Our hope is that our rules will spur and support the development of a coordinated nationwide framework that states can adopt.

With this step, we don't just advance a policy, we affirm a principle: that we have a collective responsibility to protect and serve those who protect and serve us.

We take that responsibility very seriously at the FCC. The proposal to establish Blue Alerts is just one example of our commitment to it. Rest assured that we will always be there for the men and women in blue as long as I have the honor of serving as Chairman.

With that, it is my privilege to introduce the Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Thomas Homan, who is representing the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.