

Statement of the Honorable Neal Dunn, M.D.
House Energy & Commerce Committee
“Full Committee Markup of Two Bills to Reauthorize FirstNet and Modernize Emergency Alert System”
Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 10:15 a.m. ET

[The Chair calls up H.R. 7386, the First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act]

Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word on H.R. 7386.

[Upon Recognition from Chairman Guthrie]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I urge my colleagues to support our bipartisan bill, the First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act, & I thank Rep. McClellan for Co-Leading this legislation with me.

I’d also like to note that this bill has the support from 16 public safety organizations that demonstrate broad support for the legislation among our first responders.

Chairman Guthrie, I’d like ask for unanimous consent to submit into the record:

FirstNet is not just a network; it is the backbone of public safety communications in this country.

When Congress first established the First Responder Network Authority, the objective was clear: build a preemptive network for first responders that they could rely on.

These brave men & women – the ones who step forward when others step back, who risk their lives to protect our communities – deserve nothing less than a resilient communication system.

They depend on this network every day, in every kind of emergency.

The authority governing FirstNet is set to expire. Without action, we put at risk a network that our first responders rely on with their lives.

My bill extends that authority through September 30, 2037—giving FirstNet the long-term certainty it needs to plan ahead & continue investing into this critical infrastructure.

FirstNet is especially essential for communities such as my home state of Florida. It plays a critical role in preparedness, response, & recovery when disasters strike.

My district understands all too well how devastating the impact of hurricanes & tropical storms can have on our communities.

Over the past eight years, the Panhandle has endured four major hurricanes—most recently Hurricane Helene, & most devastatingly, Hurricane Michael.

In those moments, when lives are on the line & every second count, reliable communication should never be in question.

I want to take a moment to thank the brave men & women across the country for their service & sacrifice,

& a special thank you to Walton County's very own Sheriff Adkinson for his leadership and dedication to FirstNet & keeping our communities safe.

Our first responders have never stopped showing up for us.

It is long past time we show up for them.

Thank you, I yield back.