

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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May 2, 2013

Admiral James A. Barnett, Jr.
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
Co-Chair, Telecommunications Group
Venable LLP
575 7th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Admiral Barnett:

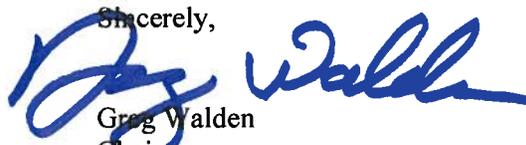
Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology on Thursday, March 14, 2013, to testify at the hearing entitled "Oversight of FirstNet and Emergency Communications."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions by the close of business on Thursday, May 16, 2013. Your responses should be e-mailed to the Legislative Clerk in Word format at Charlotte.Savercool@mail.house.gov and mailed to Charlotte Savercool, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Greg Walden
Chairman

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

cc: Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

Attachment

Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Greg Walden

1. Assistant Secretary Strickling, in attempting to justify partial suspension of the BTOP public safety grants, cited the fact that the “network of networks” model contemplated by BTOP may not be compatible with FirstNet’s statute. Your testimony seems to disagree. Could you explain how a network of networks model is consistent with a single network architecture?

2. You state in your testimony that “states that are deciding now to opt-in are taking a risk that FirstNet will be affordable.” FirstNet has unilateral authority to set lease fees and per-user core fees for opt-out states. Are states that opt-out taking an even greater risk if FirstNet controls their fiscal fate and the state is on the hook for radio access network buildout?

The Honorable Joe Barton

1. You were Chief of the FCC’s Public Safety Bureau when the FCC approved waiver petitions from 21 different state and local jurisdictions wishing to begin early deployment of a public safety network in their respective areas, including seven that received federal BTOP awards from NTIA. These projects were subsequently suspended by NTIA over concerns that they might undermine FirstNet’s efforts to build a nationwide network. While FirstNet has recently indicated a willingness to allow those projects to proceed, subject to certain conditions, their status is uncertain. What benefits, if any, do you believe would result if these projects were allowed to go forward? And, do you believe that other jurisdictions not awarded BTOP grants should be given equal consideration?

The Honorable Steve Scalise

1. It is my understanding that it will likely be years before the FirstNet network will be operational. What is the timetable for states like Louisiana that have an urgent need to move forward deploying a broadband network that’s fully interoperable with FirstNet for our emergency responders? Do you believe that non-BTOP early deployments should be permitted to go forward provided they are fully interoperable with the future FirstNet network?

The Honorable Cory Gardner

1. Mr. Barnett, in your testimony, you note that Congress’ goal of achieving nationwide interoperability can be achieved with a network of networks approach and that, contrary to Mr. Ginn’s testimony, a “national architecture” is not necessary. You observe that Congress’s goal can be achieved as long as FirstNet is guided by the principle of national interoperability and local control. Could you expand on the rationale for this, including what you see as the appropriate role for FirstNet at the national level and the decisions that should be deferred to states?

The Honorable Mike Doyle

1. According to the National Broadband Plan wireless backhaul is "critical to the deployment of wireless broadband and other wireless services," particularly "[w]hen fiber is not proximate to a cell site." I understand that the existing wireless backhaul networks face a number of regulatory and technological constraints that limit their potential capacity. These independently-powerable backhaul services are important to undergird FirstNet, the national first responder network.

How did public safety and mobile networks perform during natural events, like Hurricane Sandy, and man-made events, like 9/11?

2. Can public safety networks and mobile networks work without backhaul?

3. If the FCC ultimately reclaims spectrum in the 24 and 39 GHz range, how long will it take, including the necessary legal proceedings, for a new wireless backhaul provider to build-out a backhaul service with the seized spectrum?