



April 28, 2014

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Committee on Energy and Commerce
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Walden:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology at its hearing on FirstNet on November 21, 2013 entitled, "Oversight of FirstNet and the Advancement of Public Safety Wireless Communications."

Attached please find my responses to the additional questions for the record of Members of the Subcommittee. If you or your staff have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Edward Parkinson, Director of Government Affairs, First Responder Network Authority, at (202) 482-3785.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Ginn".

Sam Ginn

Enclosure

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

Responses of Sam Ginn to Questions for the Record

April 28, 2014

Answers for the Honorable Greg Walden

1. It has been reported that FirstNet General Manager, Bill D’Agostino, has stated that “At the end of the day, what this will be is a mosaic of different strategies, it’ll be a mosaic of different networks.” Please explain what is meant by a “mosaic of networks.”

When ex-General Manager, Bill D’Agostino, used the phrase, ‘mosaic of networks’, he was describing the way standard technology and standard interface requirements would ultimately lead to a single FirstNet network. We envision that FirstNet will run the network from a central core that will be connected to the Radio Access Network (RAN) in each state. These networks, which likely will be built with multiple vendors’ equipment, will meet each state’s unique requirements as they will have been designed through an iterative FirstNet/state consultation process. Although the state requirements may be unique and the equipment may come from multiple manufacturers, FirstNet will set common Long Term Evolution (LTE) standards and common standards for connection to the core to make interoperability a reality. Together, the FirstNet core and the RANs will form the single nationwide network.

2. FirstNet Board member, Jeff Johnson, has acknowledged that FirstNet “fell short on answers to timing and business model questions.” This information is critical to the states in their planning. What has FirstNet done to rectify the situation and what work remains? When will this information be available?

The biggest obstacle that we are facing is the lack of employees who are able to develop the answers that states are seeking. At the time of the November 21, 2013 hearing, FirstNet had 19 employees. FirstNet now has 40 employees. We are working as diligently as we can to make additional hires. The FirstNet board has published an executive summary of the program roadmap, a detailed illustration of the state consultation process, and a strategic planning process overview, all designed to enable states to plan for official consultation to begin later this year. As we continue to hire staff, we will be able to facilitate additional requests for information from the states.

3. According to reports, one of the Board members recently stated that the Board doesn’t know yet how much users will pay to be part of the network. Has FirstNet developed a cost model or performed any financial analysis to show how much the nationwide network will cost to build, operate, and maintain to ensure financial self-sufficiency and fund upgrades? If so, provide a copy of the cost model or any financial analysis performed.

There are many variables that we are considering but it would be premature to release an end-user cost or publically share the modelling and analysis being conducted until we are further along in the process.

4. FEMA Region 5 Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (Region 5 RECCWG) submitted a detailed list of questions to FirstNet last February. The Region 5 RECCWG reached out again in June to ask when FirstNet would provide a response. To date, FirstNet has not provided a response to the questions. When will FirstNet provide a response to the Region 5 RECCWG inquiry?

The statute sets forth the requirement for outreach and consultation to be conducted through the states. FirstNet will be initiating official consultation with the states (through the Single Point of Contact) in 2014. This consultation is the first step that must be conducted to develop the state RAN plans. Ultimately, there will be 56 such plans and there will be a significant amount of work that will have to go into each individual plan. The FEMA Region 5 RECCWG's questions will be covered in the official consultation process. In addition, FirstNet has been in discussions with the Region 5 RECCWG and once official state consultation with the states has been initiated, we will hold a webinar for the all RECCWGs.

5. During a recent presentation to state CIOs a spokesperson for FirstNet stated that the opt-out mechanism is "not much of an option." The spokesperson went on to state that "[s]tates have three choices: opt in, stay silent and opt in by default; or opt out, leaving the state responsible to build, operate and maintain its own FirstNet-compliant network." Given your previous testimony before the Subcommittee, does this description accurately describe the choices states have? Please explain.

States will have the option, as described in the legislation, to opt-in or opt-out. FirstNet is dedicated to ensuring that states' rights are respected at the same time that we move forward in building the nationwide public safety network. First and foremost, we must develop each state plan in full cooperation with the state.

Please note that answers for questions 6 and 7 are combined below.

6. When you first appeared before the Subcommittee you testified that based on site visits to every one of the BTOP grantees and discussions with project leaders and the vendors that "we've determined that these projects could provide benefits to FirstNet deployment efforts and generate valuable lessons..." It is clear that some of these projects won't be moving forward because of the inability of FirstNet and the BTOP recipient to execute a lease for the FirstNet spectrum. For each of the instances in which FirstNet was unable to execute a lease with a BTOP recipient, please explain the lease terms that the parties were unable to reach agreement on resulting in the failure of negotiations.

7. Please describe the terms of each of the spectrum leases executed between FirstNet and the BTOP grantees.

FirstNet offered substantially similar terms and conditions in the Spectrum Manager Lease Agreements (SMLA) to all of the BTOP recipients. The leases were drafted in accordance with the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) rules and regulations. In addition, FirstNet negotiated specific Key Learnings Conditions with each BTOP recipient, for inclusion in its respective SMLA. FirstNet's overarching approach to these negotiations was that any resulting

lease agreements were intended to last only until the states made their decisions on FirstNet's deployment plan under the process set forth in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Act). These SMLAs were designed so they would not dictate any terms, conditions, or outcomes of that future process.

The basic terms and conditions of these SMLAs are:

- FirstNet agreed to lease spectrum usage rights to operate on the 700 MHz public safety broadband spectrum for the nationwide license that was granted to FirstNet by the FCC. Each lease contained a defined geographic scope of operations. In addition, the parties agreed to comply with the FCC's laws, rules, and regulations.
- The lease term is for a maximum of 5 years. In order to facilitate continuity of service for public safety users on the lessee's LTE network during the implementation of the state's decision on FirstNet's nationwide deployment plan, FirstNet will notify the lessee at least 3 months prior to presenting its plan to a governor so that discussions can occur to maintain the lessee's access to FirstNet's spectrum during that implementation period.
- The agreement is "non-exclusive," meaning that FirstNet can enter into additional agreements or partnerships to further its development of the nationwide network. However, any such partnerships or agreements that FirstNet might enter into during the SMLA term would not interfere with the lessee's services to its public safety entities, nor would they encumber the state in making its decision after FirstNet presents the state with its plan.
- The SMLA assumes evolving standards for technical, security, and applications areas. The lessee is responsible for paying for all costs associated with complying with modifications of the FCC's rules. FirstNet will negotiate on compliance with any other changes due to its adoption of new standards, but it did not make financial commitments to cover such costs at this time due to the Antideficiency Act.
- The leased spectrum is to be used only for public safety communications.
- No spectrum lease fees are being charged to the lessee during the agreement term, in exchange for it performing activities specified in the Key Learnings Conditions. FirstNet and the public safety community will use this information for planning the nationwide network. This does not relieve the lessee from future fees that may have to be paid to use the nationwide network.
- Details of a Key Learnings Conditions plan will be completed within 90 days of the agreement being signed, and the lessee will work with a dedicated FirstNet manager on the scope of the projects, as well as how they will be measured and reported.
- The lessee's LTE equipment may need to be relocated at some future date if FirstNet needs to do so for operational efficiency of the nationwide network. If so, FirstNet will work with the lessee regarding any such exchanges of network infrastructure to facilitate the continuity of service for public safety users on the lessee's system. Also, FirstNet will negotiate the costs associated with such relocation, but it did not make financial commitments to do so today due to the Antideficiency Act.
- Following the state's decision on FirstNet's nationwide deployment plan, the lessee must receive written approval from the governor or his/her designee to have continued access to FirstNet spectrum.
- Once the SMLA has been executed and the lessee has applied to NTIA to lift its partial suspension of the BTOP funding, FirstNet will provide NTIA with its recommendation in

support of that application. The signing of the SMLA does not guarantee this grant funding will be resumed, as that decision must be made by NTIA and the Department of Commerce's Grants office.

FirstNet reached agreements on SMLAs with four BTOP grantees – the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System Authority (LA-RICS), New Mexico Department of Information Technology (New Mexico), Adams County Communications Center, Inc., (ADCOM) (Colorado), and the New Jersey Department of Treasury (New Jersey). After the leases were executed, FirstNet notified the FCC in accordance with the Commission's rules. The specific Key Learnings Conditions in their agreements addresses the following:

- LA-RICS – exploring secondary responder partnerships in the management and operations of the network;
- New Mexico – use of a remote evolved packet core; spectrum management and network use issues along the U.S./Mexico border and shared use of a state network with significant number of Federal users;
- ADCOM – availability of its network as a real-world test system for the Public Safety Communications Research (PSCR) program or FirstNet; allowing FirstNet and end user device manufacturers to provide user devices for testing on ADCOM's network and providing access to its network for high-level demonstrations of its public safety functionalities; and
- New Jersey – demonstrating the use and capabilities of rapidly deployable assets; conducting emergency management exercises that showcase the capabilities of a deployable system and documenting a Network Operations Center notification approach for the notification of key personnel of important events associated with the network.

(The full text of FirstNet's SMLAs with these BTOP grantees can be found at the FCC's website: <http://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/UlsSearch/licenseAdminSum.jsp?licKey=3422973>). Please note that the ADCOM and State of New Jersey SMLAs are not yet filed with the FCC but they will appear at this link once filed.

FirstNet was unable to reach agreements on SMLAs with the City of Charlotte (North Carolina), Mississippi, and Motorola Solutions, Inc. (MSI). Negotiations with Charlotte and Mississippi reached an impasse over the grantees' difficulties in covering their operational expenses during the terms of the lease agreements. Negotiations with MSI reached an impasse over technical and business issues raised by MSI's public safety network management agreement with Bay-RICS.

8. FirstNet General Manager Bill D'Agostino was recently quoted as saying "The BTOPs will kind of close down—[although] those that come through, come through," ... "The next phase for us is to turn our energy toward the whole broad definition of what it takes to opt in and to present a state plan that a governor can accept or make a decision on. Our hope is that there will be some states that are obviously more ready to go than others, and we'll start to move those as quickly as humanly possible. That's what we call early movers." Given this statement, please explain FirstNet's deployment strategy.

The FirstNet operating plan for 2014 and the strategic focus areas within the plan are the enabling steps to get to a plan. We are focused on ensuring that the BTOP projects move forward as designed to provide test cases for the future network. We will initiate official state consultation, which is the process through which FirstNet works with each state and territory towards developing its state plan for RAN development. Our management and technical team will be developing RFPs which have been informed by the RFI process that was conducted in 2013. These RFPs will give industry the guidance it requires to develop different possibilities for us to study and ultimately choose how we will deploy the network.

9. Several of the BTOP grantees had purchased and received equipment for their projects. Some of these jurisdictions have not yet executed spectrum lease agreements with FirstNet. In fact, the City of Charlotte, North Carolina has announced that it was unable to reach an agreement and ceased negotiations. BTOP grantees that are unable to execute spectrum lease agreements will lose funding. Please explain what will be done with the equipment purchased for these projects. Will the grantees be reimbursed for all costs incurred as a result of the suspension of funding and subsequent inability to execute a spectrum lease agreement with FirstNet? Please explain.

FirstNet does not oversee the BTOP grants. However we understand that Motorola, the recipient for the Bay Area Wireless Enhanced Broadband (BayWEB) project in California, did not purchase any equipment with BTOP grant funds; therefore, equipment disposition is not necessary. Costs incurred by Motorola for development of the project have been reimbursed to date. NTIA will continue to review and analyze invoices from Motorola's contractors as those are presented for reimbursement. Those costs that are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary for project implementation will be reimbursed upon review by NTIA and its Grants Office, NOAA.

Mississippi purchased equipment with grant funds and some of that equipment is now in use by Mississippi MED-COM to provide improved medical communications. Some grant-funded equipment was specifically designed to provide LTE service in the 700 MHz public safety broadband spectrum allocation. The State will work with NTIA and its Grants Office, NOAA, to determine the most reasonable and allowable disposition method for that equipment. NTIA will continue to review and analyze invoices from Mississippi's contractors as those are presented for reimbursement. Those costs that are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary for project implementation will be reimbursed upon review by NTIA and NOAA.

While the City of Charlotte did not reach agreement with FirstNet on a spectrum lease, the project remains active. The City is moving forward with a modified public safety broadband project that does not require access to FirstNet's spectrum. NTIA extended the grant award period to ensure that the City has adequate time to complete its modified project. The City did acquire LTE equipment with grant funds from its supplier, Alcatel-Lucent, so that equipment must be disposed of because it will no longer be used on its project.

10. When do you believe that FirstNet will be providing services to first responders?

We do not have any set timeline at this juncture. We are using 2014 primarily as a planning and development year to ensure that the network is a success. By leveraging the BTOP projects we hope to have users on our spectrum as soon as possible.

11. Please explain the role of mobile network solutions in FirstNet deployment strategy?

Mobility will play an important role in the FirstNet network. The FirstNet wireless network will be a mobile-based data network by definition. It will consist of wireless user devices that can be utilized in a mobile capacity connecting through cellular base stations to provide access to the wired data networks requested. The FirstNet network technology is based on LTE, which is an international standards based wireless mobile network technology.

12. Commercial providers, with significantly greater scale than FirstNet have not been able to make buildout in the most rural areas economical. Please explain how FirstNet will deliver service to the most rural areas.

The FirstNet strategy in some rural and wilderness areas will likely be based on the concept of allowing the users to “take the network with them.” We are considering vehicular-based systems that are linked to our network via combinations of tall coverage sites and repeaters. We are planning to use the New Jersey BTOP project to explore the use of cells on wheels (COWs), cells on light trucks (COLTs), and systems on wheels (SOWS) to provide local coverage. There are several methods being considered for connecting each of these systems back to the core network, including land-based microwave and satellite backhaul communications. We will need to take into account that first responders will require communications at the instant of arriving on site of a disaster therefore all options are being explored not just mobile.

13. FirstNet is required to establish substantial rural coverage milestones as part of each phase of the construction and deployment of the network. Has FirstNet established such milestones? Please describe these milestones.

FirstNet has not yet established these milestones due to the need for state consultations to help determine the rural coverage needs and the assets available to facilitate deployment in these areas.

14. In your testimony you stated that if the states and the Federal government permitted FirstNet to use cell site locations without fees the cost of the network would be dramatically reduced. Please explain how FirstNet intends to negotiate for these assets.

FirstNet will initiate official state consultation in 2014. This consultation will take advantage of direct interaction with the states using the State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP) funds to develop an asset inventory within each state. States will have significant input on the design of individual state RANs. It is through these discussions that those decisions will be made.

FirstNet will also be working with federal partners through the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC), which will act as the mechanism for all federal communications

and coordination. Through the ECPC, FirstNet will interact and negotiate with our federal partners in identifying federal assets that could become part of the network.

15. The statute provides that once FirstNet completes the RFP process for construction, operation, maintenance, and improvement of the nationwide network, FirstNet is required to provide the governor of each state notice of the completion of that process, the details of the proposed plan for the buildout of the nationwide network in the state and the funding level for the state as determined by NTIA. The state has 90 days after the receipt of such notice to notify FirstNet, NTIA and the Commission whether it will participate in the deployment of the nationwide network in the state or conduct its own deployment of a RAN in the state. Please explain the status of the RFP process. When will FirstNet provide notice to the states?

Currently, FirstNet has published 12 RFIs focusing on the Core, RANs, devices, and applications. The first 11 RFIs received more than 300 responses and more than 25,000 pages of information. It will take us time to analyze this information and develop RFPs; however, our goal is RFP publication in 2014.

16. It has been announced that FirstNet will be launching a website “this fall.” Please explain the plan for developing and testing the website. Please identify any contractors that were retained and the total cost of the development and launch of the website. Please attach any agreements with outside firms for the Subcommittee to review.

The FirstNet.gov website is currently online and active. FirstNet worked in collaboration with the NTIA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) in its development. It is a standard website that provides information to the public about FirstNet. FirstNet Federal staff conceptualized the design and content for the website. NTIA staff provided the technical support to develop and launch the site.

FirstNet did not issue any task orders for contract support specifically related to develop or launch FirstNet.gov. Workforce Resources contractors provided support for drafting content for the website. This work was part of its general contract with FirstNet.

A comprehensive website test plan was developed following the widely-recognized Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) publication, *829-2008 - IEEE Standard for Software and System Test Documentation*. Prior to the FirstNet.gov website launch, a variety of end-to-end tests were performed to verify and validate functionality, content, usability, legal and regulatory compliance, accessibility, and performance. In addition, FirstNet leadership worked collaboratively with NTIA’s OCIO to ensure sufficient beta testing was performed to resolve any software bugs or other technical problems.

17. Please describe the working relationship between NTIA and FirstNet? Do FirstNet decisions go through NTIA? Does NTIA have an effective veto over FirstNet decisionmaking?

FirstNet is an independent authority within NTIA, and thus FirstNet is both part of NTIA and independent of it, at least with respect to program-related decisions not expressly assigned to NTIA under the Act. The Act gives NTIA specific roles separate from and in relation to FirstNet's roles. For example, the Act requires NTIA to review and approve FirstNet fees to determine that FirstNet's fee structure results in it being self-sustaining in accordance with the Act. FirstNet is not permitted to assess fees without NTIA approval under the Act. NTIA also reviews and determines the funding of FCC-approved opt-out state plans from funds that would otherwise go to FirstNet. In addition, prior to the receipt of auction proceeds, and with respect to FirstNet administrative costs even after such receipt, funding for FirstNet is funneled through NTIA. This funding control should not be used to affect the substance of program decisions. The Act gives the Secretary of Commerce, to whom the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information reports, the authority to appoint 12 of 15 FirstNet board members. The board members, however, function independently in accordance with the above discussion once appointed.

In addition to the provisions of the Act, practical considerations have required a close working relationship with NTIA. Prior to the hiring of our General Manager and additional staff, FirstNet was entirely dependent on NTIA staff and the Department of Commerce (DOC) for administrative and day-to-day program support. For example, although FirstNet will grow its procurement function over time, for the near term FirstNet must leverage the Department's Office of Acquisition Management for procurement support. Also, prior to hiring its own Chief Counsel, FirstNet received substantial legal support from NTIA's Office of Chief Counsel. These support relationships are provided through an intra-governmental agreement for services. Finally, in addition to the day-to-day working relationships between NTIA and FirstNet staff, NTIA officials attend and participate at board meetings, but not as board members.

While FirstNet will remain dependent on NTIA and the Department for many administrative matters for some time, ultimately, however, as our organization grows, FirstNet should become fully independent of NTIA and DOC with respect to any matters that could reasonably affect substantive program decisions (other than those expressly assigned by the Act to NTIA or DOC). It is the responsibility of all parties involved to effectuate Congress' goals with regard to FirstNet's independence. Both DOC and NTIA have their own express substantive roles under the Act, and the Act's placement of FirstNet within NTIA will continue to result in a close, but independent working relationship with NTIA and the Department to jointly achieve the critical goals of FirstNet's mission.

18. FirstNet will remain a data only network until the 3GPP standards are developed for mission-critical voice over LTE. The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 directed the National Institute of Standards and Technology to, among other things, accelerate the development of "mission critical voice" and do so in consultation with FirstNet and the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC). Please explain what FirstNet has done in consultation with the PSAC to advance the development of mission critical voice over LTE.

Since November 2012, FirstNet has been participating in LTE standards development via funding provided to the NIST/NTIA PSCR program within the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), which is responsible for the creation of LTE standards and specifications. The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council's (NPSTC) Broadband Working Group (BBWG), which develops public safety broadband communications requirements, has created two public safety broadband requirements documents. The first was a Launch Requirements document, which detailed public safety's expectations for FirstNet to deliver at launch of the network. The second document was a Mission Critical Push-To-Talk over LTE Requirements document, which detailed public safety's expectations for mission critical voice on the FirstNet network. Both documents were delivered to FirstNet's Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC), which reviewed and modified the documents where necessary before delivering them to FirstNet for use. FirstNet is actively using both of these documents to develop RFI/RFPs and develop standards pursuant to mission critical voice and data over LTE.

19. The FirstNet Board approved a budget of \$194 million for Fiscal Year 2014. How much has the FirstNet Board spent to date since it was formed in 2012? How much of these expenditures were paid to outside consultants. For each consultant providing services to FirstNet, please identify the consultant, the date services commenced and the date services ended, whether or not the contract was renewed, the term of the renewed contract, and provide a description of the services provided under the contract.

As of December 31, 2013, FirstNet has obligated \$23.3 million and outlaid \$18.2 million.

<i>\$ in 000s</i>	Obligations	Outlays
FY 2013	21,127	12,288
FY 2014 (thru Dec-13)	2,141	5,956
Total Spending	23,268	18,244

Of this spending, FirstNet obligated \$11.5 million to contracts with consultants of which it paid \$10.6 million. Below is more detail on FirstNet contracts with consultants:

Description of Overall Service	Vendor Name	Service	Type	Start	End	Obligations (\$000)	Outlays (\$000)	FTE in Contract
Wireless telecommunications subject matter experts with a range of technical expertise including wireless broadband technical planning, wireless communications business and financial planning, wireless telecommunications market research, and state, local, territorial, and tribal outreach.	WORKFORCE RESOURCES	Contract 1	Cost	11/15/12	05/14/13	2,589	2,589	14.1
		Contract 2	Cost	03/18/13	11/17/13	8,400	7,678	28.4
		No Cost Extension	Cost	11/18/13	12/17/13			6.4
					Subtotal		10,989	10,267

Conference planning and event management services for a series of regional workshop events held in several locations throughout the US and for board meetings and other conference and events FirstNet may hold over the period of the contracts.	EVENT PLANNING GROUP	Conference planning and event management	Fixed Price	03/01/13	02/28/14	265	265	N/A Fixed Price
Provide advice and assistance to NTIA and the Board in the areas of project management and acquisition in the efforts to establish the FirstNet network.	FUNCTIONALIT, INC.	Labor	Cost	09/20/12	03/21/14	72	72	N/A Shared with NTIA
An audit of FirstNet's FY 2013 financial activity in accordance with the audit and report requirements contained in Section 6209 of the Act.	KPMG L.L.P.	Labor, Travel, and Other Direct Costs	Fixed Price	11/26/13	03/26/14	174	0	N/A Fixed Price

Addendum:

Additional contracts that have been awarded by December 31, 2013, but have not been reflected in the financial system.

Description of Overall Service	Vendor Name	Service	Type	Start	End	Obligations (\$000)	Outlays (\$000)	FTE in Contract
Support internal and external communications planning and execution for FirstNet by providing personnel with key skills and capabilities.	INFORMATION MANAGEMENT RESOURCES, INC.	Task 1	Cost	12/13/13	12/15/14	950	0	3.0
Provide project management and planning to facilitate outreach for the nationwide public safety broadband network.	E-9 CORPORATION	Task 1	Cost	11/14/13	11/30/214	1,594	0	5.0

Answers for the Honorable Joe Barton

1. In my home State of Texas, Harris County is using live data when operating the public broadband network. As you are aware, the current authority to operate the public safety broadband network expires on Nov 26th and public safety users will no longer be able to operate on that network unless a long-term lease agreement has been executed or a renewal of the Special Temporary Authority (STA) has been granted.

- Can you give us a status update on the lease agreement and will FirstNet support the renewal of the STA until final approval of a lease agreement can be reached?**
- What progress has been made during the negotiations to grant Texas a long-term lease agreement? What hesitations does FirstNet have with granting Texas this type of agreement?**

On November 25, 2013, with FirstNet's support, the FCC renewed the STA for Texas' Harris County operations through February 24, 2014. On December 17, 2013, the FirstNet Board adopted a Resolution to extend its negotiations with Texas on a Spectrum Manager Lease Agreement (SMLA) for Harris County through February 24, 2014. The February deadline was extended by an additional 180 days at the March 11 FirstNet Board meeting and we are hopeful that these discussions can result in the signing of a SMLA.

2. It is my understanding that a small number of jurisdictions in Texas (City of Ft. Worth, City of Irving and Randall County) have purchased LTE equipment and that Texas is seeking authority for these jurisdictions to deploy and operate on the public safety broadband network. There are also a few other locations in which Texas is seeking approval to deploy including Austin, Brazos County and the Rio Grande Border. Texas currently has the approval to operate a total of 14 sites, but wants to expand to 84 additional locations.

- Is FirstNet willing to support the limited deployment of these additional jurisdictions outside of the Harris County deployment?**

FirstNet and Texas have discussed Texas's interest in expanding its public safety broadband operations beyond its existing Harris County operations. In November of 2013, FirstNet provided Texas with a list of questions regarding its expansion plans to help FirstNet evaluate whether it might be feasible to enter into a SMLA with Texas to permit such expanded operations. Texas provided some initial responses to the FirstNet questions; however, FirstNet has asked for additional details and clarification particularly regarding the sustainability of these additional jurisdictions. Texas is currently developing this additional material and this will help greatly as we work towards a possible agreement.

Answers for the Honorable Anna Eshoo

1. In September, the FCC announced a landmark, voluntary industry solution to achieve interoperability in the lower 700 megahertz band. What steps is FirstNet taking to leverage this opportunity? Do you agree this agreement will provide first responders with more roaming opportunities and greater redundancy?

FirstNet is pleased with the agreement in the lower 700 MHz band, which aims to improve interoperability among the commercial carriers, and the opportunities this may provide for public safety in rural areas. However, at this time, FirstNet is focusing its initiatives on the network roll out to ensure it meets its goals of providing services to the public safety community. FirstNet has not yet developed a plan for roaming with commercial partners and therefore is not in a position to respond to whether the agreement will provide first responders using its network with more roaming partners and greater redundancy.