

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Hearing on “Progress Toward a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network”
June 16, 2015**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today’s hearing will examine the progress FirstNet has made in delivering on its mandate to establish a truly nationwide public safety broadband network for our nation’s first responders, with an eye toward what’s next.

I am pleased that FirstNet appears to have put the distractions of early controversies and missteps behind it and has started making the decisions necessary to achieve the goal of a nationwide network. With the FCC’s recent spectrum auctions successfully producing the funding for FirstNet, a significant component of this effort is in place. The Board’s plan to release a Request For Proposal in early 2016 demonstrates that FirstNet is on the cusp of taking a major step forward in the realization of the network.

Today’s discussion provides an opportunity for FirstNet to highlight the process employed to get this far, and what lies ahead. Mr. Davis, Chief Information Officer of the State of Ohio with a long history in emergency communications, offers an especially important perspective on the process as we work to determine what more, if anything, FirstNet can do to ensure that state, local, and tribal input is fully reflected in its plans.

Local participation is essential to the successful deployment and sustainability of the network. We all share the goal of seeing FirstNet implemented and operated in a timely and effective way. Today’s hearing, another in our ongoing oversight of FirstNet, reflects the committee’s commitment to that success.

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