

**Opening Statement of Chairman Mike Doyle  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
Hearing on “Strengthening Communications Networks to Help  
Americans in Crisis”**

*February 27, 2020*

I want to thank our witnesses for appearing before us today to discuss a range of legislative proposals intended to address challenges facing the American people and those responsible for helping them in times of crisis.

The bills before the subcommittee today include Chairman Pallone and Mr. McNerney's RESILIENT Networks Act; Ms. Eshoo's WIRED Act; the READI Act introduced by Mr. McNerney, Mr. Bilirakis, and Mr. Olson; Mr. Engel's Don't Break Up the T-Band Act; Ms. Matusi's and Ms. Eshoo's Emergency Reporting Act; Mr. Thompson's PHONE Act; Mr.

Moulton and Mr. Stewart's National Suicide Hotline 49  
Designation Act; and Ranking Member Walden's FIRST  
RESPONDER Act.

In the last few years, resiliency has taken on a new meaning. Our Nation has faced a surge of extreme weather events from Super Storm Sandy in New Jersey and New York to severe hurricanes in Puerto Rico, the Gulf, and the southern eastern United States.

Puerto Rico, in particular, has been hit hard with multiple hurricanes. In this most recent earthquake, thousands of people lost their lives and they are still struggling to reconnect critical infrastructure. The Federal Government simply has not done enough. We must do better for the people there.

In California, people have seen their State ravaged by some of the first wildfires in history. These fires haven't just burned down homes, they have destroyed whole communities. In the Midwest, communities have experienced record flooding and crop losses.

More and more exception weather events that used to occur once in a generation are becoming a regular occurrence. Human-caused climate change is driving the shift in our weather patterns and, while we work to combat even worse effects in the future, we need to deal with this new normal now.

Our Nation's communications infrastructure is a lifeline to those facing exigent circumstances and it needs to be ready to

take on the challenges we know it will face, whether that be fires, floods, Category 5 winds, or 9-1-1 call centers outages, a public safety emergency in a major city, or a personal crisis that could cost someone their life. In each case, communication networks that are ready and resilient to the challenges we know they will face can be the difference between life and death.

It is my hope that, as we examine legislation before us today, we can come together and find common ground because, while each of our districts has some unique challenges, we can all acknowledge that our communities are safer and stronger when folks can communicate with each other and access the resources they need in an emergency.

With that, I would like to yield a minute to my good friend Mr. McNerney. And then after his minute, a minute to Ms. Eshoo.