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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF NEXT GENERATION 911 FUNDING
AID TO LOCALITIES BUDGET BILL A3003/S4003
BEFORE THE 2023 STATE JOINT LEGISLATIVE
BUDGET HEARING ON LOCAL/GENERAL GOVERNMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK
FEBRUARY 15, 2023**

Verizon is pleased to submit this written testimony before the Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Local Government.

The Executive Budget – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services Aid to Localities Bill (A3003/S4003) - appropriately includes \$20 Million to assist counties to begin transitioning to Next Generation 911 (NG911). Verizon applauds Governor Hochul for recognizing that there is an urgent need to modernize the State's emergency-response systems by implementing NG911 technology. The Governor understands that just as people are changing the way they communicate, so too must the 911 system change and evolve beyond the limits of legacy systems.

Today, 911 centers face a wide range of challenges, ranging from funding, staffing issues, and high call volumes to helping people with special needs and the proliferation of the use of new communications technologies. Providing counties, and ultimately first-responders, with new funding for NG911 is crucial to modernizing our emergency-response infrastructure to help local governments meet these challenges. The funding provided by this bill will allow counties to transition to a fiber-optic network that will ultimately connect to a single Public Service Answering Point (PSAP) in each county. This is an excellent step towards improving the safety of all New Yorkers.

We respectfully encourage state Lawmakers to approve this proposal and consider future support. The legislature could also recommend that the state undertake an expanded role in the management of the 911 system by building and operating an NG911 ESInet system to support counties in their historical role of managing 911. With NG911, the sharing of multimedia for emergency response is a reality only made possible through an NG911 ESInet system. Because an ESInet networks allow for the transmission of high-bandwidth files, citizens in need can share potentially life-saving information with 911 operators through multiple media such as real-time text messages, voice messages, voice-to-text-messages, video streaming, and photo streaming. This increase in situational awareness would enable 911 personnel to respond to emergencies more effectively, resulting in more accurate data sharing between dispatchers and first responders, and more lives saved.

When an emergency occurs, getting vital information to first responders at the right time can save lives. This is why investments in NG911 are so important, as they will also

improve PSAP ability to help manage call overload, natural disasters, and transferring of 911 calls and proper jurisdictional responses based on location tracking.

Investing in NG911 infrastructure is key to keeping New Yorkers safe. Providing our counties and public safety community with funding for fiber connections and a comprehensive solution will lead to the kind of emergency response that residents need and expect.

Thank you for allowing us to provide comments on this important proposal.