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Written Testimony – Public Protection Joint Budget Hearing

Memo in Support of Funding for Next Generation 9-1-1

The State Capitol Project Proposal (Bill A.8804 / S.8304 - page 908) includes language that appropriately includes \$10M to assist counties through Interoperable grants, as well as \$85M for the County Community Program to help counties begin transitioning to Next Generation 911 (NG911). AT&T applauds Governor Hochul for recognizing that there is an urgent need to modernize the State's emergency-response systems by implementing NG911 technology. Governor Hochul understands that technology has significantly advanced with the use of wireless devices and texting, and our 9-1-1 centers need to be updated to be fully functional and reactive.

We respectfully encourage state Lawmakers to approve this proposal and consider future support. In addition to this funding, the legislature could also recommend that the State undertake an expanded role in the management of the 9-1-1 system by building and operating a statewide NG911 Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network (ESInet) system to support counties in their historical role of managing 9-1-1. Senator Martinez and Assemblymember Jean-Pierre introduced a bill last year, **A.5942 / S.4583**, which would accomplish this goal by codifying into law the requirements for NG911 and create a statewide ESInet network capable of connecting calls, texts, and other forms of media from the public to 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). As the State looks to continue efforts in strengthening their emergency preparedness and readiness posture, New York should look to join other states that have implemented a statewide ESInet system including Arkansas, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Tennessee and Wisconsin. A statewide system like in other states can help to ensure uniformity of quality service for all communities and all New Yorkers, no matter where they may live, as well as to provide protections for taxpayers.

With NG911, the sharing of multimedia for emergency response is a reality only made possible through an NG911 ESInet system. Because ESInet networks allow for the transmission of high-bandwidth files, citizens in need can share potentially life-saving information with 9-1-1 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 9-1-1 personnel to respond to emergencies more effectively, resulting in more accurate data sharing between dispatchers and first responders, and potentially more lives saved.

When an emergency occurs, getting vital information to first responders at the right time can save lives. Investments in NG911 are so important, as they will also improve 9-1-1 operators' ability to manage call overload, mitigate harm caused by natural disasters, and transferring of 9-1-1 calls and proper jurisdictional responses based on location tracking.

We respectfully ask New York State to continue to lead in emergency response communications and provide support and guidance for interoperability across the state. New York residents deserve the peace of mind knowing that our 9-1-1 system is resilient, reliable, and functional.