

# 911 Program Reauthorization Presentation

July 12, 2007

## **1. Who are we?**

Chief Daniel O'Leary (President of MMCC and Brookline Chief of Police), George Fosque (Cambridge 911 Director and MassNENA President), and David Clemons (Worcester Communications Director)

Representatives of the Major City Police Chiefs (MMCC) and other organizations responsible for public safety. The 40 largest cities in the Commonwealth take 64% of the 911 calls and are responsible for over 67% of the crime.

## **2. What are we proposing?**

Various changes to expiring "911 Laws" (Chapter 6A, sections 18A-18I) as recommended by the DTE, the SETB, MMA, Police and Fire Chiefs, and various E911 stakeholders. In particular, we seek the ability of agencies that operate 911 centers to recover some of the costs of operating those critical 911 call processing functions. We are only proposing to support 911 functions, carefully defined. Currently, unlike most all other states, only telecoms can recover their 911 costs in Massachusetts; this restriction needs to change.

## **3. What will be the benefits to the public?**

Improved handling of all emergency calls, life-saving of callers by giving over-the-phone emergency instructions, professional development of 911 dispatchers, better management of all emergencies including major regional disasters, improved technology in 911 centers. 911 Centers are at the heart of homeland security and especially need funding as federal homeland security funds are rapidly diminishing.

## **4. What costs are involved?**

The state 911 program imposes a monthly surcharge on "phone bills" (currently \$0.30/mo for cell phones and \$0.99/mo for wireline phones). Currently about \$50M/yr is raised and most of the funds go to reimburse telcos for 911 telephone equipment and network services to 270 911 Centers operated mostly by local government. Under the proposed successor statutory language, all technologies would pay the same monthly rate, new/emerging technologies (e.g., VoIP, prepaid) would be surcharged, and the state's 911 program support for local 911 centers would be stabilized for years to come. The proposed new combined rate would likely be less than \$0.99/mo, substantially less than the average rate of \$1.50/mo nationally. Grants would be made to local 911 centers, based on a formula that weighed population served and 911 call volume, so that they could provide improved 911 call processing service and 911 dispatcher training.