

TESTIMONY OF JOSHUA K. MICHAELIS
BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON UTILITIES
SENATOR ROBERT OLSON, CHAIR
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2018

At the current funding level of .60 cents our dispatcher radio project is only sustainable for two years, resulting in an eight year shortfall. If the proposed .90 911 fee is passed, our dispatcher radio project is sustainable through the life of the project; utilizing our remaining 911 cash reserves. Without question Rice County supports the fee increase to .90 cents.

GIS Data

Rice County receives 78.9 % of our 911 calls via wireless devices and seconds are critical when trying to locate citizens. All too often 911 calls are routed inappropriately because cellular calls are routed based on of which tower the call "hits" off of and/or which tower face. As Kansas migrates to NG911, calls will be sent to the appropriate 911 center via geospatial call routing. Geospatial call routing is based off of the caller's cellular device, rather than a tower location.

The ongoing GIS data and maintenance are critical to geospatially 911 call routing. Due to the size of Rice County we don't have a GIS department, so we are currently expending existing 911 funds to maintain this critical component of NG911. Rice County currently contracts with one of the several GIS vendors recommend by the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council. This ongoing maintenance has added a fiscal component to 911 centers that did not use to exist. We look forward to deploying geospatial call routing when provided by the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council. Rice County supports the proposed changes in SB 420, these changes allow the development of rules and regulations which are key to successfully locating citizens and saving lives.

Training Standards

Rice County does not support the removal of recommend training standards. The Rice County Board of County Commissioner's specifically recognize that highly trained Public Safety Telecommunicators are just important as technology. In matter of fact, they rely equally upon each other. Rice County has already expended several thousands of dollars to meet the current training standards as recommended by the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council and adopted by the full Council in 2015.

The minimum recommend training standards were developed and are in concert with existing Public Safety Telecommunicator training standards; such as the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), the Association of Public Safety Communications (APCO), the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Currently 35 states have a training and certification process for Public Safety Telecommunicators.

If Kansas is to be considered as national leader in NG911, like we are. The Kansas 911 Act must consider all facets of 911, including the training of personnel and not just technology. The Kansas Legislature in 2011 found training important enough that it was included in the existing Kansas 911 Act and I would humbly request that this Legislature consider adding training back into this amended bill.

Thank you for this opportunity and I would be glad to answer any questions that you might have.

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