



October 28, 2010

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller
Chair, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Communications Workers of America (CWA) supports S.3756, the Public Safety Spectrum and Wireless Innovation Act. CWA represents 700,000 workers in communications, media, airlines, manufacturing and public service, including 16,000 public safety employees.

It is long past time to provide public safety with dedicated spectrum to create a nationwide, interoperable wireless broadband communications system.

S. 3756 would achieve this goal. It would allocate 10 megahertz of spectrum known as the "D block" to public safety to support a nationwide, interoperable wireless broadband network. The legislation gives the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) the authority to hold incentive auctions based on the voluntary return of spectrum. These auctions would provide funding to support the construction and maintenance of public safety's network, while freeing up additional spectrum for innovative commercial uses.

S.3756 is a common sense approach to provide dedicated capacity for the current and future needs of public safety. With advances in technology, public safety has an increasing need to access mission-critical high-speed data and video networks. Fire services need real-time access to building blueprints, health-monitoring sensors, and GPS tracking systems. Emergency medical services need access to telemedicine, high-resolution video and patient records. Police need access to streaming video, surveillance networks, and biometric technologies like mobile fingerprint and iris identification. Federal government operations need to access data networks during large-scale incidents to coordinate Federal assistance with states and localities.

In an emergency situation such as September 11, 2001 or Hurricane Katrina, public safety cannot depend upon commercial networks. Public safety needs its own dedicated network, built and maintained by network operators with skilled, career employees.

CWA joins with other leading public safety organizations in our support of S.3756.

Sincerely,



Larry Cohen
President