

SOUTH DAKOTA



STATE 9-1-1 COORDINATION BOARD

In Care of: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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February 13, 2024

Dear Senator Mehlhaff,

I am writing on behalf of the South Dakota 911 Coordination Board to express our full support for House Bill 1092, which proposed raising the 911 surcharge fee from \$1.25 to \$2.00. This increase is crucial to address the widening gap between revenue and expenditures of our Public Service Answering Points (PSAPs) and to ensure the continued provision of reliable emergency services to the citizens of South Dakota.

Over the years, the demand for emergency services has continued to rise, putting significant pressure on our PSAPs. Despite this increasing demand, the current surcharge fee of \$1.25 has remained stagnant, resulting in a shortfall between revenue and the costs associated with maintaining and improving our emergency response infrastructure.

Advancements in technology, particularly in the Next Generation 911 System, have provided opportunities for enhanced emergency response capabilities. However, these advancements come with additional costs for implementation, maintenance, and training. Without adequate funding, our PSAPs will struggle to keep pace with these technological advancements, putting the safety and well-being of our citizens at risk.

Furthermore, one of the most critical components of our emergency response system is our dedicated personnel. Yet, many PSAP employees are not adequately compensated for the essential services they provide. Increasing the 911 surcharge fee will allow for the allocation of resources to address this issue, ensuring that our emergency dispatchers and operators receive fair wages for their invaluable contributions to public safety.

In conclusion, House Bill 1092 is vital for ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of our emergency response system in South Dakota. We urge you to support this bill and take action to address the funding challenges facing our PSAPs. By doing so, we can ensure that our citizens receive the timely and effective emergency assistance they need during times of crisis.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle DeNeui".

Michelle DeNeui, South Dakota 911 Coordination Board Chair911 Coo