EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Jobs Creation Act of 2012 (HR3630) was approved by Congress and signed by the President on February 22, 2012. The final 75 pages of the legislation dealt with public safety communications including:

- Creation of a National Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN).
- Next Generation 911 (NG911) standards and financing.
- Spectrum reallocation from broadcasters and other sources.

While all three areas have some impact on the state, the focus of this overview will be on the NPSBN. This nationwide system will be centrally managed with common technical standards. This approach is to avoid many of the issues involved with current voice systems where different frequencies, different technologies, and no central management has provided interoperability issues for the past 75 years. Below are the primary points of this legislation:

System
Outlined in the standards is a national public safety broadband system based upon the technology that commercial carriers are aligned with: Long Term Evolution (LTE). The alignment with commercial standards should allow common development of equipment and applications, lowering the traditionally high cost of public safety communications equipment.

The system would utilize spectrum set aside for this purpose, including the "D-Block" that has generated so much attention over the past two years. The design, buildout, and management of the system would be the responsibility of an entity organized under the US Department of Commerce and the National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA) designated as FirstNet. FirstNet will be managed by a board of directors from the ranks of federal, state, and local government along with industry representation.

Participation
The focus of this system is national. The only opt-out available for states is to generate a statewide plan that meets all of the national plan requirements. States would then need to construct and manage the system, maintain connectivity with the national system core, and ensure that all updates and system improvements are in line with the national standard.

Cost
There has been $7b earmarked for this project, which is predicted to only be a fraction of the total cost associated with this program. The State of Minnesota calculated it would take $332m to build out a system within their state that would meet the national standards if it were to take on the project. This cost factors in the utilization of the extensive tower and telecommunications transport network that the state owns and maintains. Some infrastructure

cost may be offset by the provision allowing FirstNet to contract with commercial carriers for these services.

For the states, the legislation calls for a 20% match by the state for build-out costs within the borders of that jurisdiction. These costs will not be known until a national design is completed, and the design and cost for that design are delivered to the Governor or designee. At that point each state will have 90 days to approve or opt out. If opting out, the states will be allowed another 180 days to present a plan that is acceptable to FirstNet and FCC.

States Responsibility

Each state has the following list of responsibilities:

1. Assign a single point of contact, if none designated Governor is default.
2. Assign an agency or governmental body to responsible for the associated grant funding administration. There is $135m nationally dedicated to implementation planning at the state level. Planning funds will be used to coordinate resources within the state that can be used for buildout, governance expenses, training, policy and SOP development.
3. Designate a governance for the oversight and ongoing policy of the system within the state. This can be a new representative group or additional duties assigned to an existing group.
4. Participate with FirstNet in the implementation planning process, provide information as required in the design, procurement, and buildout.
5. Prepare financially. Hopefully some guidance will develop prior to the final design and states will have time to prepare for the budgetary aspects of this project.
6. Add a broadband policy to the Statewide Interoperable Communications Plan (SCIP).