

City of Cleveland

CLEVELAND, TENNESSEE
Fire Department

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Honorable Harry Green, Ph.D., Executive Director
Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
226 Capitol Boulevard Building, Suite 508
Nashville, TN 37243

Re: TACIR Study of House Bill 0204 / 911 Funding

Dear Dr. Green:

Thank you for the leadership of your office in undertaking a study of the bill introduced by State Senator Eric Stewart (SB 0208) and State Representative Judd Matheny (HB 0204), a bipartisan initiative concerning the life-saving, enhanced 9-1-1 service (E-911) upon which all citizens of our state depend in times of crisis and need. We thank you for inviting comment from the 911 community and the elected leadership of local governments, which are vitally involved, both operationally and financially.

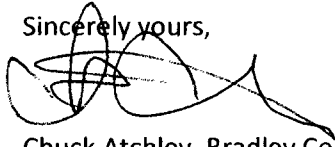
Positive features of the Stewart-Matheny legislation:

- \$25,500,000 in new revenue, according to information provided by the General Assembly staff;
- All new revenue dedicated to Tennessee's 100 Districts (94 county & 6 municipal);
- \$3,750,000 additional revenue reserved for the 50 lowest population Districts;
- Rate adjustment protects revenue now retained by the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board (TECB), while securing amounts currently received by Districts.

We hope TACIR will recognize the seamless relationship between County & City governments and their respective 911 Districts. Local governments use property taxes to support dispatching operations, either directly by annual budget appropriation to a Sheriff or Police Department, or indirectly to Districts pursuant to an interlocal agreement. Current TECB policy prohibits 911 revenue being used to assume costs currently paid by local governments for dispatching operations, although there is substantial disparity in the application of this policy. We propose that the 911 fee pay all E-911 costs, including dispatch operations. This would secure necessary revenue for the District and relieve local governments of this financial obligation. Attached is specific funding and financial information about our District.

We also request TACIR to study all facets of the 'next generation' 911 project to validate whether the costs have benefits to Districts that are equal or greater in value, and to determine whether other parties, including the State of Tennessee, will benefit from the project and should share in costs, proportionately. The TECB has been impounding 911 wireless fees for the NG-911 project, which fees otherwise would be received by Districts.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chuck Atchley', written over a dotted line.

Chuck Atchley, Bradley County ECD Board Member