

**COFFEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT &
COFFEE COUNTY 911 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT**

December 18, 2009

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

Re: House Bill 0204 / 911 Funding

Dear Dr. Green:

Thank you allowing us an opportunity to comment upon HB 0204 by Rep. Judd Matheny, and its companion bill, SB 0208 by Sen. Eric Stewart. Coffee County and Coffee County 911 strongly support this bipartisan legislation. HB 204/ SB 208 will generate over \$25,000,000 each year in new revenue, and dedicate 100% to local 911 districts. The bill also secures grant funding now doled-out annually by the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board (TECB). We have no objection to the other feature of the bill, which provides additional funding to the lower-population districts.

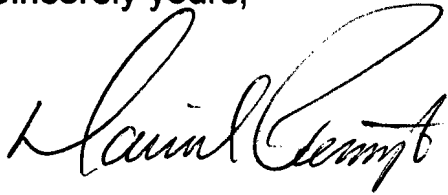
The bill will benefit Coffee County 911 and Coffee County Government (CCG), and every other 911 District and County in Tennessee, as well as many municipalities, by relieving financial pressure for the support of 911. CCG now supports 911 dispatching with \$ 799,404.00 in county property taxes.

HB 204 would increase the cell rate to \$1.50. That rate has not been adjusted since enacted in '98, when cell phone users were a small fraction of the total call volume. Today, cell phone calls represent almost 2/3 of total 911 calls. Our residential landline users have been paying \$.55 for many

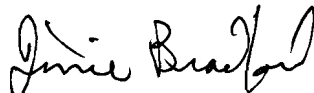
years. It is long overdue to bring fairness in funding to 911. We ask TACIR to use this opportunity to recommend that 911 be fully-funded by user fees. Property taxes should not be required to pay for this service.

Every County in Tennessee invests proportional amounts of property taxes for dispatching, whether the service is managed by a 911 district or a Sheriff Department. We ask TACIR to determine the total. The Matheny-Stewart bill does not attain this goal, but is an important step forward in this direction.

Sincerely yours,



HONORABLE DAVID PENNINGTON
COFFEE COUNTY MAYOR



MR. JIMMIE BRADFORD, Chairman
COFFEE COUNTY 911 BOARD

Copies: Coffee County Commissioners

Members of the 911 Board

Hon. Eric Stewart, State Senator

Hon. Judd Matheny, State Representative

Hon. Becky Ruppe, President, Tennessee County Mayors

Association