

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery**  
**of**  
**Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr.**

*Markup of 2 Bills, Full Committee*

**March 25, 2026**

I am pleased the Committee is marking up two public safety communications bills this morning.

The looming sunset of the First Responder Network Authority, which is set to expire in less than one year, is one of the most urgent communications issues we face right now. That is why, for years, I have advocated for Committee action to preserve FirstNet, which has become a critical tool for public safety professionals and first responders in its first decade in operation.

That's why I support H.R. 7386, the First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act, which addresses the February 2027 sunset by reauthorizing the Authority for 10 years. Extending the FirstNet Authority means the millions of law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and other first responder users will maintain access to the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network as it stands today.

The bill also expands public safety's representation on the FirstNet Board so that FirstNet users have multiple seats at the table. This will give public safety professionals and volunteers on the ground protecting our communities each day more opportunity to steer the FirstNet Authority and Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network in the direction that best serves first responders.

While the FirstNet Authority's work has been positive for public safety, it is clear that the original law that created FirstNet contained structural deficiencies that at times opened the door to waste and mismanagement. These issues have been detailed at length in various Commerce Department Office of Inspector General reports over the years. In response to those issues, the bill and AINS before us today makes important reforms to increase transparency and accountability at the FirstNet Authority for the benefit of FirstNet users across the country.

I want to commend Representatives Dunn and McClellan for their bipartisan leadership on this important legislation and urge my colleagues to support it today.

I also support passage of H.R. 7022, the Mystic Alerts Act, and I appreciate the work of Representatives Fletcher and Pfluger on this legislation to expand access to emergency alerts.

Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.