

The memorial notes there are 47 disparately funded public safety answering points (PSAPs) in the state and this memorial was requested by the Association of Counties' E911 directors affiliate. It also notes there is only one 911 program employee in the Local Government Division of DFA responsible for overseeing all of the 911 PSAPs statewide. Additionally, the memorial mentions the future demand of next generation 911 (NG911) in the state and notes New Mexico is one of only five states that do not have an NG911 plan and is missing out on federal grant funding for lack of a plan.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal impact.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Department of Public Safety provided the following response:

“The memorial requests a study be performed on the Enhanced 911 Directors Affiliate proposal to investigate on the benefits of a single statewide 911 program that would be charged with the administration of the state’s 911 programs across the state. The memorial highlights the need for funding, equipment and training needs for the state’s enhanced 911 (E911) services to be guided by 911 professionals, including the development of a plan to implement Next Generation 911 technology. Such a plan would enable the state to apply for federal funding to implement next generation 911 in the State.

Other states such as Washington, New Hampshire and New Jersey have implemented highly successful 911 oversight boards. These board are focused not only on funding, but the broad spectrum of best practices, standards, system design and training to enhance the state’s 911 system. As an example, such boards:

1. Develop and maintain a statewide 9-1-1 system, which includes configuration of the 911 network;
2. Develop plans and standards for Next Generation 911;
3. Define role of counties and municipalities;
4. Develop, maintain and ensure that all technical and operational standards are being met by all PSAP’s;
5. Ensure that all counties 9-1-1 operational plans are up to date and meet all standard requirements;
6. Have rule making authority to implement standards.

An oversight board for New Mexico is strongly supported, as it has the potential to bring all PSAP’s up to one standard of best practice which can save lives. All PSAPs should have the opportunity to receive the same training, expert technical advice, and certified experience.

By bringing all PSAP employees up to their highest level of expertise this would provide standardization, equality, hopefully bring new hires into the state, the state could be proactive instead of reactive. In addition, such a board could provide financial stability in planning for PSAP’s regardless of size. A longer term vision would be that all PSAP’s eventually experience interoperability across county lines which saves lives and opens lines of communication.”

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The Legislative Finance Committee is finalizing an evaluation report of the E911 program.

IR/sb/jle