

Greetings wherever this email finds you in your day. I am writing this morning, on Friday, January 21, 2022 – just hours prior to our hearing on SB-5555 in front of the Senate Committee on State Government and Elections. SB-5555 defines telecommunicators as first responders. This acknowledgment is vital to our profession and the individuals doing this essential work. I know I don't have to convince you of the significance of this acknowledgment – but I could use your help ensuring the Senators understand it!

These next hours are precious – we need you to show your support for SB-5555, which also establishes a Certification Board to implement minimum training standards and certification for telecommunicators. Again, I know I don't have to sell these two issues to you – you know the work and the needs here. So please help us get this bill passed.

This morning I have noted three Unions have signed in against the bill and we suspect others may do so in the last few minutes before the submittal deadline. While there are only a few signed in as against right now, we must ensure we have as many telecommunicators signed in as “pro” as possible to prevent any misimpressions with the Senators on the committee. **We are especially asking that if you are a member of a union or guild that you sign in pro and indicate what union or guild you are a member of in the Organization field of the form.** Something like “ Telecommunicator and member of <name> union /guild “ would be great. This will show the Senators your individual position – this bill is about you and your work.

If you are on shift but know someone off shift that may be interested in this info – please forward, text or use smoke signals to get them engaged.

Want to know who has signed in so far? Go to: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Senate#> and select the “State Government & Elections” committee, and the 1/21/2022 for the meeting date. Select SB 5555 Safety telecommunicators from the agenda list and you should see this box:

Select type of testimony	IMPORTANT
I would like to testify remotely	Deadline at 9:30 am 1/21/2022
I would like my position noted for the legislative record	Deadline at 9:30 am 1/21/2022
I would like to submit written testimony	Deadline at 9:30 am 1/22/2022
See who has signed in for this agenda item 	

If you click the button “ See who has signed in for this agenda item” a list will pop up showing how many people have signed in to virtually testify at the top, and then a list of people who have registered their position for the record. You can sort this list by column, if you click the Position header, anyone who signed in as Con will rise to the top.

Please act now and at the very least click the [“I would like my position noted for the legislative record”](#) – it takes one minute and is so important. ALSO indicate your membership in your union in the Organization box on this form so the

**Senators can see we have telecommunicator support. Something like “
Telecommunicator and member of <name> union /guild “ would be great.**

When I ran for the presidency of our Chapter I said this about first responder classification, training, and certification:

I believe it is imperative to get the classification correct, not just so you receive the respect you deserve, but also because accurate classification will support improved recruitment and retention. We will also leverage accurate classification to help establish minimum training standards, and to begin the cultural shift from telecommunicators as “operators” to telecommunicators as first responders. 911 is part of the first responder team and we must find ways to shift the mindset with our public and other responders so we can take our rightful place alongside of them.

Anyone can [sign in to virtually testify on this bill](#). I know that may sound intimidating, and I am a bit nervous myself, but I’m committed to this bill and so I do it. We already have a four incredibly awesome telecommunicators and supervisors signed up to provide testimony – Are there others that would be willing to testify? Especially if your union has or is planning on taking a stand different than your own. Think about it and sign-up – you must be available for the entire time between 10:30am and 12:30pm TODAY and be able to connect to the session virtually. Send me a note or text me if you are thinking about doing this and I can give you some pointers on preparing for it.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I’ll be available until 10:25am this morning and I will post some updated information on our [website](#) following the hearing. I encourage you to check out the website, we are doing some incredible work on this bill and on re-energizing our committees. Lots more fun and activity is coming your way in 2022.

[Want to watch the hearing? Go to this page and halfway down is a link that says “Watch Today’s Meeting – 01/21/2022 10:30 AM*”](#)

Thank you for your service and for reading this.

Katy



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#911CertificationMatters
#SB-5555