

## **For Immediate Release**

# **Washington APCO-NENA Chapter Announces Introduction of Training and Certification Bill for 911 Public Safety Telecommunicators**

(Association of Public Safety Communications Officials – National Emergency Number Association)

**Olympia, WA, January 10, 2022** – Today, Senator Kevin Van De Wege (D), 24<sup>th</sup> legislative district, introduced SB 5555 – Concerning Public Safety Telecommunicators, establishing a certification and training program for 911 Public Safety Telecommunicators.

Public Safety Telecommunicators answer and respond to 911 calls for assistance. They are the first link in the public safety response chain and are the only emergency responders that do not have a formal training and certification process. Standardized training for public safety telecommunicators will provide consistency to the public and responder agencies throughout the state. Katy Myers, President of APCO-NENA, comments, “This legislation is timely and necessary. The 911 profession is undergoing significant change due to the Trueblood settlement, policing reform measures, the introduction of the 988 system, and the modernization of 911. Standardized training will ensure we keep pace with social changes and are prepared for evolving technologies, while still fulfilling our primary mission - to respond to the public’s requests for help and support our field responders.”

Passage of the bill establishes a certification board in the State Enhanced 911 Coordination Office to approve standard training programs and set certification and recertification requirements for public safety telecommunicators throughout the state at no additional taxpayer cost.

The certification board will represent diverse stakeholders of the 911 system consisting of 10 members:

- The chair or vice-chair of the State Enhanced 911 Advisory Committee;
- Two 911 Emergency Communication Center directors or 911 coordinators (one from the east side of the state and one from the west);
- Two labor union representatives;
- One representative appointed by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs;
- One representative appointed by the Washington Fire Chiefs Association;
- One representative from the Washington Association of Counties; and
- Two public safety telecommunicators from a 911 Emergency Communications Center (one from the east side of the state and one from the west).

The State Enhanced 911 Coordination Office will provide staff support and assistance to the certification board.

For more information, please go to <https://wapconena.org/>