

## Get to Know Your Legislators

### Talking Points

#### PSAP basics:

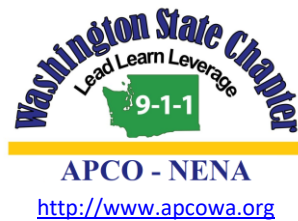
- Who we are, ideas could include:
  - Describe the job of your PSTs and the training involved.
  - Walk them through what happens when a person within their legislative boundary calls 911 and how they receive help. Look for complicated situations like transfers between centers, misrouting of 911 wireless calls etc. where you can leverage that to get their interest.
  - Mention the various agencies you serve and in what capacity; types and number of calls per month, year, etc
  - High level description of how 911 works in the state and the commonalities and differences between centers
  - Describe the state 911 office, the county coordinators and how well everyone works together to solve problems
    - This may generate questions about 988 and how it intersects with 911; coordination between the two occurring at the state level and some PSAPs in the state, processes are still developing.
  - WA APCO-NENA public governmental affairs (PGAC) may reach out during sessions and what that group does – the gaps it fills where PSAP directors and the state can't (like lobbying)
- Number of employees
  - Difference between number of approved budgeted positions and the number of trained staff
  - Length to train staff, difficulty in finding interested and qualified applicants
- Funding Sources/Annual Budget
  - 911 Excise Tax – amount collected, how its shared between state and county of origin. State grants to support agencies without larger tax base. Hasn't increased since 2012 – even though inflation has increased, means less buying power. Limits to the use of the 911 excise tax monies. If used outside those boundaries it places federal grant money in jeopardy.
- Any large projects or initiatives in the works

#### Recent 911 related legislative action in Washington:

Established minimum training standards during the 2022 session (how did your person vote on HB-1055?)

#### Mission Statement:

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- 2022 bill also recognized PSTs as part of the first responder community – talk about why this is important, tie it to the staffing challenges below.
- 2023 session brought approval to move PSTs into the PSERS. Why that's important and how did your person vote on that bill?

### **Federal initiatives:**

- 911 SAVES Act – a bill requiring the federal government to reclassify PSTs as a protective service occupation (they are currently classified as clerical)
- Extending America's Spectrum Auction Leadership Act – sets aside a portion of FCC auction revenue for NG 911 to become standard in all states and localities.

### **Current challenges:**

- Staffing
  - Recruiting new employees
  - Retaining current employees
- Funding
- Technology – keeping up and maintaining infrastructure

### **How they can help:**

- Support and get to know us
  - Telecommunicator week
  - Major events or incidents
  - Annual PSAP visits
  - Invite us to attend their relevant events
- Put us in your toolbox when you have questions about 911 or police/fire dispatch or 988/mental health alternative response
- Stop by 911 goes to Olympia on March 4, 2024

### **Ideas for PSAP leaders to consider:**

- Has there been a recent challenging or interesting incident within your legislator's area of coverage that you can discuss with them. Pick an incident that helps support your ask. For example, if you would like to exemplify how important the PST job is, find a recent life saving award that you gave to a PST and discuss that call with them.
- Research the individual and their politics before the meeting. Learn their political interests and find a way to weave 911 and your center into a discussion around one of those topics. This makes your center relevant to something they care about.

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