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Good morning and thank you. It's an honor to be joining you today at the APCO Annual Conference. I bring greetings from Chairman Kevin Martin, other FCC Commissioners and the staff in the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau.

Many of you have heard me speak before and know that I spent three decades in law enforcement. Because of that experience I understand the important role emergency communications play in the arena of public safety and homeland security. My 16 months with the FCC have been rewarding, with one of the most rewarding aspects being able to partner with the professionals at APCO.

I have enjoyed working this past year with your president and my friend, Willis Carter, on various initiatives where we are striving to improve communications for our Nation's first responders. Willis has represented you well in these matters. He believes wholeheartedly in APCO's mission and works diligently as your ambassador. He is known in the communications world as being honest, ethical and above reproach; therefore, people listen to him and take his counsel seriously. He has proven himself to be a forward thinker and a person willing to take a stand on important issues.

APCO has been a leader in creating partnerships which foster and strengthen advancements to ensure the implementation and availability of an effective public safety communications system. APCO, partnering with NENA, has led the way by creating an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect and collaboration. This partnering is extremely important because your two organizations speak for more than 22,000 public safety communications and 9-1-1 professionals. When APCO and NENA speak as one your voices become louder and clearer. You should continue to speak with a unified voice when possible.

While APCO is striving to improve public safety communications, we in the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau are working on some challenging initiatives as well. I'd like to speak briefly about a few ongoing Bureau endeavors which are currently underway.

The first issue I'm sure you are all interested in is E 9-1-1 location accuracy. I'd like to thank APCO for partnering with NENA to lead in this initiative. This issue has been at the forefront of much recent discussion and action within the FCC as well as with PSAPs and industry. The Commission's rules regarding wireless Enhanced 9-1-1 seek to improve the effectiveness and

reliability of 9-1-1 service by providing PSAPs with additional information on wireless calls.

The goal of location accuracy is to ensure that when someone calls 9-1-1 needing emergency help, he or she can be located and reached in a timely manner. With over 255 million Americans, or 84% of the population utilizing wireless telephone services this enhancement is imperative in keeping up with the technological advances in our country. According to the wireless industry, there are approximately 291,000 wireless 9-1-1 calls per day.

Moreover, it's important to note that approximately 14% of households no longer have landline phones. Their wireless phone is not only their convenient way to communicate, its their only way to communicate, and we must be able to locate these wireless callers in the event of an emergency.

The reasons for achieving compliance at a service area level that is meaningful to PSAPs and first responders remain important. In its September 2007 Order, the Commission recognized that the lack of meaningful and reliable location information could extend the amount of time necessary for a 9-1-1 call-taker to obtain the location of the caller or the site of an emergency resulting in longer

dispatch times, and perhaps even no response by public safety who lacks sufficient information to locate the caller.

We are appreciative and supportive of the efforts of APCO and NENA in working together, and with the carriers, toward an agreement on wireless 9-1-1 location accuracy. The FCC will continue to partner with APCO in the endeavor to improve location accuracy for wireless 9-1-1 as we realize the importance of getting this right.

Another issue we have been working diligently on is the 700 MHz Public/Private Partnership as the means for promoting the construction and deployment of a nationwide, interoperable broadband public safety network. I'm sure you're aware that the initial D-Block auction did not result in a successful bidder, and we subsequently issued a Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on this subject. In this Second Further Notice, we sought broad input from all interested parties. Our aim is to identify ways we can improve upon the existing Public/Private Partnership concept while meeting the broadband communications needs of the public safety community in a commercially viable manner.

We appreciate the effort that APCO and others in the public safety community undertook in submitting comments in this proceeding. As APCO observed, there appears to be continued support for the public/private partnership, a re-auction of the D Block license and a network sharing agreement between the D Block licensee and the public safety broadband licensee. Further, APCO and other commenters note that there continues to be no alternative funding mechanism available to ensure access by individual public safety agencies to an advanced, nationwide, interoperable broadband network, over spectrum dedicated for public safety use. And while there were differing views on the level of autonomy local public safety agencies should be afforded, many, including APCO, observed that the nationwide public safety broadband licensee could afford local flexibility while maintaining a broadband network with a nationwide level of interoperability.

We continue to work hard developing a 3rd Further Notice of that will seek comment on specific proposed rules. At that time, we will again call upon you to provide comment so that we can continue down the path to achieving a nationwide interoperable broadband communications network that is beneficial to public safety.

On another important spectrum management issue, I'd like to provide you with an update on the 800 MHz re-banding process. We continue to focus on clearing this spectrum for public safety and resolving the interference issues that America's first responders face in many regions of the country.

Compared to where we were a year ago, we have made tremendous progress. Most public safety licensees now have executed agreements and are proceeding with the physical re-banding of their systems, and over 200 public safety systems have moved to their new channels. We now have procedures in place to ensure that Sprint Nextel will vacate channels when public safety needs them. We were very gratified by the DC Circuit decision in May that completely affirmed the Commission's view with respect to Sprint's obligations in this respect.

We have also made progress on the Canadian and Mexican border issues. We recently released a band plan and timetable for the Canadian border, and we hope to take similar action with respect to the Mexican border soon.

Despite the progress, I remind you that we are now officially in "overtime" on the 36-month clock that the Commission

established for this process and much remains to be done. As you know, we have granted a number of waivers to public safety licensees that are still in the re-banding process. I'd like to focus my remarks on these licensees.

We recognize that some licensees need more time for re-banding because they have large, complex systems and interoperability issues that require careful planning and execution of the transition. We believe the majority of non-border licensees can and should complete moving to their new channels within the next 12 months, and in our waiver orders, we have generally given licensees who can complete re-banding before July 2009 the time they have requested. But licensees who ask for extensions beyond next July will be subject to a much higher level of scrutiny, as will their vendors and consultants.

If you seek a longer extension, we will expect you to show us that re-banding work is ongoing, benchmarks are being met, and steady progress is being made. You must also show us that you have a schedule for completing the process in a reasonable time frame. If you are still in planning, you need to focus on finishing the planning process and starting work as quickly as possible.

Let me also say a word about re-banding and system upgrades. We know that some licensees have negotiated to upgrade their systems as they transition to their new channels, and to pay for the cost of the upgrade. While this is fine for licensees that have planned to upgrade from the beginning, we have heard reports of a few instances where licensees are proposing upgrades late in the negotiation process or where vendors are seeking to negotiate upgrades with licensees after the licensee has completed re-banding negotiations with Sprint. Because we are concerned that this could lead to further re-banding delays, let me underscore that we will not be sympathetic to extension requests in such situations. At this late stage in the process, public safety licensees need to focus on completing re-banding of their existing systems and saving their plans for upgrades until after the transition.

With continued hard work and dedication by all stakeholders in the re-banding process, I am confident that we will largely complete the process in the coming year.

Lastly, I'd like to mention the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau's Clearinghouse. We are working to create a useful tool for your use with our internet webpage. We want this to be a source you seek out regularly for information. You can

locate it at www.fcc.gov, click on Public Safety/Homeland Security Bureau and then click on “Clearinghouse.” The clearinghouse was established for the collection, evaluation and dissemination of public safety communications information. On this site, you can find information on best practices, interoperability plans, grants, communications plans, case studies and other reference materials. We welcome your input and cooperation in this endeavor.

I am pleased to announce that this past Thursday our Bureau received permission to hire a public safety fellow to come to DC for a year and work on these issues in our Outreach Division. Details are being developed, but if you might be interested please contact my office for more information.

In closing, thank you for the job you do and for your willingness to do it against what seems like overwhelming odds. Your dedication is admirable. I appreciate it, the FCC appreciates it and most importantly, your citizens appreciate it. On behalf of the FCC and specifically the Bureau’s staff, please accept my thanks for all you do to protect life and property and for your commitment to public safety.

It has been my pleasure addressing you today. I hope you have a wonderful conference.

***Present Willis Carter PSHSB Challenge Coin.