

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF RICE COUNTY
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES, & TELECOMMUNICATIONS
REPRESENTATIVE JOE SEIWERT, CHAIR
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, 2019

Mr. Chairman and Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Rice County, in support of House Bill 2084 amending the current Kansas 911 Act. Since implementation of the 911 Coordinating Council's hosted solution it has proven to be an effective and efficient system for today. However, without amending the current Kansas 911 act future progress is not sustainable, which comes at a cost to the citizens of Kansas.

Fee Increase

Rice County 911 Emergency Communications Center transitioned to the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council's hosted Next Generation 911 (NG911) solution in December of 2016. The current funding mechanism is not sufficient enough to assist the Citizens of Rice County. Previously Rice County was able to utilize the Wireless Advisory Board Grants to fund our 911 call handling equipment. The cost of the NG911 call handling system must now come from our existing 911 funds.

One of the major changes proposed in the bills is an increase of the 9-1-1 user fee from the current \$.60 per device to \$1.03. Of this increase, \$.20 would come directly to the Rice County Emergency Communications Center for fiscal support of operations, while \$.23 would support the statewide, Next Generation 9-1-1 system. While this may seem to be a large percent increase, but is equivalent to just one value meal; at any restaurant. This seems a small price to ensure that 9-1-1 service maximizes the protection of life and property for every Kansan


Rice County has recently Invested 2.5 million dollars to replacing our County's antiquated radio system infrastructure. This is a critical component of providing 911 service by dispatching emergency responders, which ultimately helps the citizens of Kansas. Funding of this radio infrastructure project will have included the utilization 75% of Rice County's existing 911 funds. That dollar amount is \$167,900.00 which required fiscally responsible budgeting for over 10 years and is 6% of the project total . Rice County supports the proposed .43 cent fee increase for delivery of 911 service. Which is less than recommended in the 2018 Legislative Post Audit.

GIS Data

Rice County receives 78.9 % of our 911 calls via wireless devices and seconds are critical when trying to locate citizens. All too often 911 calls are routed inappropriately because cellular calls are routed based on of which tower the call "hits" off of and/or which tower face. As Kansas migrates to NG911, calls will be sent to the appropriate 911 center via geospatial call routing. Geospatial call routing is based off of the caller's cellular device, rather than a tower location.

The ongoing GIS data and maintenance are critical to geospatially 911 call routing. Due to the size of Rice County we don't have a GIS department, so we are currently expending existing 911 funds to maintain this critical component of NG911. Rice County currently contracts with one of the several GIS vendors recommend by the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council. This ongoing maintenance has added a fiscal component to 911 centers that did not use to exist. We look forward to deploying geospatial call routing when provided by the Kansas 911 Coordinating Council. Rice County supports the proposed changes in House Bill 2084, these changes allow the development of rules and regulations which are key to successfully locating citizens and saving lives.

Thank you for this opportunity,



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