**News for Immediate Release**

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**Legislation to Help Fund 911 Seen as First Step in Saving State System**

**Harrisburg** – New legislation will help align funding for the 911 system now and in the future, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Director Glenn Cannon said today. Governor Tom Corbett signed House Bill 583 into law on May 21.

In the past, the 911 funding system depended largely on landline customers, but more people are abandoning landlines for other forms of communication.

As a result, county requests for 911 funding exceeded the total amount of funds available.

This legislation provides a one-year transition period to bring the disbursement of state funding into line with available revenue.

Sponsored by the Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee Rep. Stephen Barrar (R-Chester), the legislation had overwhelming bi-partisan support, passing the House unanimously and with only one dissenting vote in the Senate.

"This is Harrisburg at its best," Cannon said. "Here we had both parties working together to ensure help is only a phone call away for every Pennsylvanian."

A recent Legislative Budget and Finance Committee report said that while Pennsylvania's 911 program has been a success story for years, it faced a crisis that threatened its viability and sustainability.

"911 is the backbone of the entire emergency response system in the commonwealth," Cannon said. "Simply put, a functionally bankrupt 911 wireless fund likely would have jeopardized public safety throughout the commonwealth."

The bill also fosters cost saving opportunities for counties by giving the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency the ability to facilitate joint purchasing and regionalization of 911 centers.

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