



The VON Coalition

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VON Coalition Praises Senate For Helping Advance VoIP 9-1-1 Solutions

BACKGROUND: Today, the Senate Commerce Committee unanimously approved S. 1063, the "E9-1-1 Improvement Act." The legislation requires the FCC to develop new rules for VoIP 9-1-1 within 120 days, gives VoIP providers direct access to the 9-1-1 network, establishes FCC waiver authority to provide flexibility, ensures VoIP services are never cut off due to issues related to 9-1-1 capabilities, provides equivalent liability protection for VoIP 911 as other phone services, acknowledges the importance of industry's role in developing technological standards for automatically identifying the geographic location of users of nomadic VoIP service, and requires the creation of a national plan for a next generation 9-1-1 system that uses VoIP to provide breakthrough advances in emergency communications.

The following statement can be attributed to Staci Pies, President of the VON Coalition.

"Dialing 9-1-1 can be the most important call a person ever makes. That is why VoIP providers are committed to providing 9-1-1 emergency service in an Internet world, and commend FCC and Congressional efforts to accelerate solutions to ensure VoIP subscribers can reach emergency services by dialing 9-1-1.

The Senate Commerce Committee answered the call for workable emergency services in the Internet world. Today's advancement of bipartisan legislation sponsored by Senators Nelson, Burns, Clinton, and Snowe represents an important recognition that fostering complete and comprehensive solutions for the delivery of 9-1-1 calls by VoIP providers is important for consumers and industry alike.

There is a growing recognition among policymakers that there are distinct technical differences between fixed and nomadic VoIP, and that providing 9-1-1 and enhanced 9-1-1 services is a responsibility shared by many. They recognize that providing E9-1-1 requires Incumbent phone companies to provide reasonable access to the 9-1-1 network itself, equivalent liability relief for 9-1-1 call takers, and assurances that someone will be there to answer the phone. Importantly, the legislation also ensures that VoIP customers are not cut off from vital communications services. This legislation focuses not only on what is achievable today, but on developing a comprehensive national plan for creating a next generation 9-1-1 network capable of a host of breakthrough emergency enhancements.

Members of the VON Coalition are dedicated to offering the most robust 9-1-1 service possible, and are grateful to these lawmakers for working to provide the FCC with the tools it needs to ensure that the VoIP community is able to meet its obligations to provide emergency calling services. Given the urgency of the issue, we are calling on House leaders to also act quickly to ensure workable 911 and E911 solutions for VoIP."

About the VON Coalition:

The Voice on the Net or VON Coalition consists of leading VoIP companies, on the cutting edge of developing and delivering voice innovations over Internet. The coalition, which includes Acceris, AccessLine, AT&T, BMX, BT Americas, CallSmart, Cisco, Convedia, Covad, EarthLink, iBasis, Intel, Intrado, Level 3, MCI, Microsoft, MobilePro, Multi-Link, New Global Telecom, Openwave, Pandora Networks, PointOne, Pulver.com, Skype, Switch Business Solutions, T-Mobile USA, USA Datanet, and VocalData, works to advance regulatory policies

that enable Americans to take advantage of the full promise and potential of VoIP. The Coalition believes that with the right public policies, Internet based voice advances can make talking more affordable, businesses more productive, jobs more plentiful, the Internet more valuable, and Americans more safe and secure. Since its inception, the VON Coalition has promoted pragmatic policy choices for unleashing VoIP's potential. More information about the VON Coalition can be obtained at the following website:

<http://www.von.org>