



The VON Coalition

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Contact: Jim Kohlenberger
(703) 237-2357

VON Coalition Praises Hill Leaders For Helping Unlock 9-1-1 Solutions for VoIP

BACKGROUND: Today, Congressman Bart Gordon and other hill leaders introduced the "IP-Enabled Voice Communications and Public Safety Act of 2005." The legislation requires the FCC to develop new rules for VoIP 9-1-1 access within 180 days, requires telephone companies to provide non-discriminatory access to the 9-1-1 network, gives the FCC the authority to adopt rules for comprehensive 9-1-1 solutions, includes provider parity provisions, enables equivalent liability relief for call-takers, and requires a national plan for a next generation 9-1-1 system.

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 support FCC and Congressional efforts to ensure VoIP subscribers can reach emergency services by dialing 9-1-1."

Today's introduction of legislation by Reps. Gordon, Shimkus and Eshoo is 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.

These lawmakers understand that providing 9-1-1 and enhanced 9-1-1 services is a shared responsibility requiring the development of new industry standards and technologies, as well as coordination among public safety agencies, VoIP providers, and incumbent local exchange carriers who own the emergency services infrastructure. They recognize that providing E9-1-1 requires direct 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. 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. We look forward to continuing to work with Congress to further refine the legislation and ensure that the regulatory net doesn't inadvertently catch the wrong fish."

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, Conveda, Covad, EarthLink, iBasis, Intel, Intrado, Level 3, MCI, Microsoft, MobilePro, Multi-Link, New Global Telecom, PointOne, Pulver.com, Skype, T-Mobile USA, Texas Instruments, USA Datanet, and VocalData, believes that Americans are fundamentally better off with a generally hands off regulatory approach to Internet and Internet based services like VoIP. More information about the VON Coalition can be obtained at the following website: <http://www.von.org>