



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on State Affairs

**FROM:** Marcie Rainbolt, Government Affairs Associate

**DATE:** September 25, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Assembly Bill 471

Modernizing Wisconsin's 911 system has been a priority for counties and other stakeholders since the early 2000s. In the 2017-19 state budget, \$6.7 million was reallocated from the Police and Fire Protection Fund for the creation of an emergency services IP network (ESInet) which will allow Wisconsin to move towards a long overdue upgrade for 911. The 2019-21 budget allocated \$19.7 million in FY 2019-20 and has to be used before the conclusion of the current biennium. These funds will help ensure that the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is able to continue the progress of transitioning the state to Next Generation 911 (NG911) as the state is still handling 911 calls on 1960s technology.

This session, the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) has been advocating for the creation of a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) state grant program. Despite the state's involvement in funding the creation of an ESInet, only a limited number of counties will have the necessary equipment to utilize the new digital platform.

Wisconsin did receive a grant from the federal government in the amount of \$2.9 million with a 40% non-federal match requirement. According to the DMA this money will be prioritized for those PSAPs that have equipment at the end of life and not NG911 capable. The DMA plans to distribute the money per answering position in the amount of \$27,492 with a local match requirement of \$18,328.

This money alone is not enough to pay for the equipment needed and the ongoing updates to keep the equipment current. Price County in their last budget approved funding to update their PSAP which has two main stations and one backup call station. They have budgeted \$147,000 for the equipment and an additional \$191,000 for a 10-year service agreement on the maintenance, upgrades, and management of the equipment. In the 2020

Assembly Bill 471  
Page 2  
September 25, 2019

budget for Price County, they have set aside an additional \$30,000 for the Capture 911 recording system.

As is evident, the one-time federal grant will not be sufficient to help the county PSAPs in this state purchase and maintain their NG911 equipment. WCA supports Assembly Bill 471 and sincerely hopes the legislature will fund a grant program as soon as the grant application process is created by DMA.