

# NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION



January 21, 2025

The Honorable Norma Torres  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2227 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Torres:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), representing 3,081 sheriffs and over 20,000 public safety professionals - including deputies, chiefs of police, and other law enforcement officials across the United States – we write to support the 9-1-1 Supporting Accurate Views of Emergency Services (SAVES) Act.

Public safety telecommunicators, including 9-1-1 call takers and dispatchers, are a vital part of our emergency response system. Call takers answer 9-1-1 and other emergency calls, serving as the lifeline between individuals in crisis and the first responders who provide assistance.

Dispatchers relay vital information to police officers, EMTs, and firefighters, using caller input, traffic cameras, and inquiry results to coordinate timely and effective responses. These professionals are on the front line—communicating with people in extreme circumstances, de-escalating conflicts, calming the panicked, and reassuring the anxious. Despite their indispensable contributions, 9-1-1 dispatchers are not currently recognized as first responders.

The 911 SAVES Act seeks to correct this oversight by officially reclassifying 9-1-1 dispatchers as first responders. This legislation represents an important step forward in recognizing the indispensable role telecommunicators play in the effectiveness of our emergency response teams. These unsung heroes are vital to the safety and security of our communities, and it is long overdue that we honor their extraordinary service.

The National Sheriffs' Association cannot overstate the significance of public safety telecommunicators in the daily work of saving lives. We thank you for your leadership on this critical issue and stand ready to support all efforts to advance the 911 SAVES Act and to ensure these dedicated professionals receive the recognition they deserve.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Sheriff Kieran Donahue.

Sheriff Kieran Donahue  
Canyon County, Idaho  
President  
National Sheriffs' Association

A blue ink signature of Jonathan Thompson.

Jonathan Thompson  
Executive Director, CEO  
National Sheriffs' Association