

**FirstNet Holds First State Plan Consultation Meeting in Maryland**

FirstNet Press Releases By Corey Ray

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ANNAPOLIS, MD - The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) today joined public safety communications officials from across Maryland to hold the first in a series of meetings with all 56 states and territories working together to build a nationwide public safety broadband network. The state consultation meetings aim to increase FirstNet's understanding of the states' unique needs as they move forward together on a state plan.

Attendees to the Maryland state consultation meeting included Governor Martin O'Malley, Maryland State Police Superintendent Col. Marcus Brown, State Representative Adrienne Jones, Chief Technology Officer Greg Urban, and Maryland Interoperability Director Ray Lehr.

"We are grateful to the state of Maryland for volunteering to host the first state plan consultation meeting and for helping get this critical phase underway," said TJ Kennedy, FirstNet's Acting General Manager. "This partnership not only allows FirstNet the opportunity to work with Maryland on developing its plan for a nationwide public safety broadband network, but it also helps establish a blueprint for future meetings with all other states and territories working on their plans."

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 requires that FirstNet consult with regional, state, and local jurisdictions on, among other things, developing requests for proposals. Over the last year, FirstNet has worked with legislators, industry leaders, and public safety stakeholders to establish the mechanisms and relationships necessary to ensure effective consultation with each state.

In April, FirstNet delivered consultation packages to each state and territory's single point of contact (SPOC), highlighting the steps that need to be taken to develop a state plan. Those steps include setting an initial consultation meeting, data collection and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and the development of preliminary, intermediate, and final plans. Maryland was one of the first states to respond to the call to hold a state plan consultation meeting.

"We were excited to help FirstNet get this important process started and hope to provide 'lessons learned' to the other states and territories to get us all closer to this mission critical network," said Ray Lehr, who is the Maryland SPOC.

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