

Rep. Barnett offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 124.

A resolution to memorialize Congress to enact legislation, S. 911, to unite our nation with a single, interoperable public safety network in order to protect the public and the lives of our first responders.

Whereas, The United States has over 55,000 public safety agencies across the country, with many using different and incompatible radio systems when responding to emergencies; and

Whereas, On September 11, 2001, when police commanders ordered the evacuation of the World Trade Center towers by rescue workers, the firefighters did not hear the warning as they were using a different radio system than the police, resulting in increased casualties; and

Whereas, Forty-six different agencies responded to the Columbine High School shootings in 1999 and command personnel were forced to use runners to relay crucial information to responders. Again, the radio systems were not compatible; and

Whereas, The same problem presented itself for first responders to the Oklahoma City bombing and the first World Trade Center bombing which again wasted precious minutes and jeopardized additional lives; and

Whereas, The federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 was intended to solve the multiple radio system problem by requiring that broadcasters move to digital transmissions so that channels could be freed up for public safety use. However, efforts to build a national public safety communication system have been derailed numerous times over the past 15 years; and

Whereas, Only two weeks ago, the 5.9 magnitude earthquake that shook Virginia also caused cellular networks to be overwhelmed and unavailable for emergency communications again demonstrating the need for a national public safety communication system; and

Whereas, S. 911, known as the Public Safety Spectrum and Wireless Innovation Act, passed out of the U.S. Senate Science, Commerce and Transportation Committee with bipartisan support in June 2011. The legislation would allocate an additional 10 MHz of open radio spectrum for first responders nationwide (known as the D-block) and would require standards to guarantee that different agencies with different radio systems can communicate; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize Congress to enact S. 911 to unite our nation with a single, interoperable public safety network in order to protect the public and the lives of our first responders; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.