

## HB-1435

Chairman Kasper and members of the GVA committee, my name is Glenn Bosch, Representative from District 30 Bismarck. I'm here this morning to introduce HB1435.

Today, Public safety communications systems in the State of North Dakota are at a critical juncture. The State's current mission critical networks are comprised of a patchwork of dozens of aging and disparate systems that have not kept pace with the public safety community's evolving needs for increased reliability, performance, and interoperability. Land mobile radios serve as an essential communications tool for over 900 public safety and other public-sector agencies comprised of 20,000 users and devices and 23 Public Safety Answering Points ("PSAP", "Dispatch", or 9-1-1 Call Centers") distributed across all 53 counties and several state agencies. Many of these systems—primarily anchored on 1970s technology, and implemented individually by State, local, and municipal entities over the past three decades—will soon reach the end of their functional lifecycle and, as the vendors begin to sunset old technologies, will no longer be supported by their manufacturers.

Officially established by Governor Jack Dalrymple in 2009 and revised on September 14, 2012 under Executive Order 2012-10, the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee, or SIEC, was established as a collaboration among representatives from state agencies and responder groups from across North Dakota counties, townships and cities for the purpose of continually improving effective communication between emergency first responders, emergency management personnel and other emergency service providers critical for federal, state and local governments during an emergency.

Then during the 63rd Legislative Assembly, the Legislature codified the work of the SIEC, establishing the Committee as a permanent body under [NC 37-17.3-02.1](#). with a diverse membership under the premise that a statewide integrated radio communication system would more effectively serve the goals of law enforcement and emergency response personnel and thereby better serve the people of North Dakota. In 2014, several member organizations of the SIEC jointly funded a study to explore options and determine whether the State needed to consider changes to mission critical communications.

Based on this initial report, the 64th State Legislature charged "the [North Dakota] Information Technology Department [ITD], under the direction of the SIEC to determine the *feasibility* and *desirability* of implementing a *Statewide Interoperable Radio Network* (or SIRN 20/20) and provide a holistic evolution of the State and Local communications networks into a single integrated statewide solution. The SIRN 20/20 plan was designed to address the demand from population and emergency incident growth, enhance statewide interoperability and other prevailing first-responder safety expectations, and prevent technology obsolescence, all in a cost-effective and timely manner, and under a sustainable and well-governed framework.

After reviewing the study results, the 65th Legislative Assembly drafted and approved legislation authorizing ITD to begin implementation of a statewide interoperable radio network. HB-1178 and SB-2021 provided an appropriation derived from an additional \$.50 fee collected on communications connections and loan authorization from the Bank of North Dakota. Based on a combination of the appropriation in SB2021 and the language in HB-1178, ITD was authorized to execute a procurement of \$28.7m. To date, other than the cost for the development of the RFP, that money has not been spent and approximately \$5m in fees have been collected. The bills also continued to mature the makeup of the SIEC committee, adding three new members, including representatives from the House and Senate as well as adding the ND Indian Affairs Commission to the panel to ensure inclusion across all aspects of North Dakota public safety, planning, procurement, and operations.

Lastly, 1178, required entities operating public-safety answering points to relinquish legal rights to any radio frequencies required for the for the operation of the network.

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 an RFP was issued for a system that when completed would provide 95% mobile and 85% portable coverage across North Dakota, including specific coverage for the 112 most populous cities (population over 500 and county seats). Additionally, 20Db coverage (Heavy Industrial Building) would be provided in seven identified urban areas, Bismarck/Mandan, Fargo/West Fargo, Grand Forks, Williston, Minot & Jamestown.

After an extensive procurement process, an intend to award was issued to Motorola Solutions on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The award, contingent on funding, was approximately \$206m. Generally, the cost can be broken down into three major categories, towers (\$97m), subscriber devices (radios, \$100m), and core systems (councils, \$9m).

As you can see, HB1435 is the result of nearly a 10-year collaborative effort from the Public Safety community to improve communications among our states First Responders. The bill before you details the Financial, Implementation and Governance of the proposed project.

## **FINANCIAL**

To recap the total project cost is estimated at \$206M, Section 7 of the bill provides a \$40M appropriation from the strategic investment and improvement fund.

Section 6 provides a \$80M line of credit, paid back by the continuation of the \$.50 connection fee as detailed in Section 4.

This total, of \$120M, funds the required towers, state radio councils, and a \$1500 radio cost share outlined in Section 3.

The remaining project costs, approximately \$86M, are the responsibility of the local jurisdictions (cities and counties).

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Section 1 line 9 of the bill establishes ITD as the department responsible for the procurement of the system. ITD has been involved with the entire RFP process, is represented on the SIEC, and has extensive experience in the deployment of large technology projects.

Also, in Section 1, lines 12-14 provides clarity as to the State's responsibility to fund only the required tower infrastructure and the councils used by State Radio.

## **GOVERNANCE**

Section 2 authorizes the SIEC committee to adopt rules regarding the operation of the radio network and adds representatives from the ND Association of Counties and League of Cities to the committee.

Section 3 authorizes ITD to track and audit users of the system. This process will be important as the system is deployed, and ongoing maintenance costs are allocated to the users of the system.

Lastly, Section 5 asks legislative management to consider a study the governance and funding of our state's public safety. Clear governance will be more important than ever as we move into a unified infrastructure.

Chairman Kasper and members of the committee, as you can see this bill is final part of a long and thoughtful process, at this point, I'll stand for questions and ask for your support of the bill.