



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Mayor's Office

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****TRANSMITTED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL****

March 6, 2018

The Honorable Jason Grenn
State House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol, Room 418
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Support for HB385

Representative Grenn:

I write this letter today on behalf of the Fairbanks North Star Borough and in support of House Bill 385, "An Act relating to multi-line telephone systems." Multi-Line Telephone Systems (MLTS) connect dozens, hundreds, or thousands of "extension" telephones to a telephone switch and are frequently used by institutions and business such as government agencies, banks, hotels, health care facilities, and schools.

MLTS include VoIP, as well as other network and premises-based telephone systems.

Facilities using MLTS are located in communities throughout Alaska.

Emergency response delays have resulted when callers using MLTS have been unable to provide a specific location within a large complex or campus to a 911 dispatcher or a caller is unaware that they must dial a prefix such as "9" before calling 911.

HB 385 authorizes municipalities to elect, by ordinance, to require operators of MLTS to provide with each 911 call made from the system, accurate location information of the telephone from which the call originated. Municipalities will also be authorized to enforce their own MLTS/911 ordinances, reducing the burden of relying upon a hearing before the Regulatory Commission of Alaska when disputes arise.

This legislation ensures that a "dispatchable location", including floor, room, and suite location information is provided to a 911 center when calls are received from large buildings using MLTS. This enables first responders to reach 911 callers without having to spend precious minutes or even hours searching a building for the person in need of help.

HB 385 also requires that MLTS operators ensure that their systems will allow a caller to call 911 without dialing an additional prefix (such as 9) or an access code. This aligns with a national initiative to provide direct access to 911 from MLTS called "Kari's Law." Named after Kari Hunt, the victim of an attack in a hotel room who died while her child attempted to call 911 and was unaware of the need to dial "9", the initiative ensures that a person needing police, fire, or emergency medical services is able to directly dial 911 from any MLTS telephone and receive assistance.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough strongly supports HB 385 and the language included in this bill was identified as a legislative priority by the Borough Assembly. Seconds count during emergency responses, and passage of this legislation will have an immediate and far-reaching benefit for emergency responders and the citizens they serve.

Sincerely,

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karl Kassel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karl" and last name "Kassel" clearly distinguishable.

Karl Kassel, Mayor