



9-1-1 Goes to Washington 2026

February 22-25, 2026, Pentagon City

By State of Hawaii 9-1-1 Board

State of Hawaii 9-1-1 Board & County Public Safety Answering Points Travel to D.C.

9-1-1 Goes to Washington unites hundreds of emergency communications professionals from across the country with government leaders in the nation's capital to tackle the most urgent 9-1-1 and emergency communications issues.

The event provides an opportunity for participants to engage directly with elected and appointed officials and take prompt action through meaningful discussions.

The State of Hawaii 9-1-1 Board and representatives from each county's public safety answering points attending 9-1-1 Goes to Washington to meet with the State of Hawaii's elected officials. Meetings were held with Representative Jill N. Tokuda, Representative Ed Case, Senator Mazie Hirono, and Senator Brian Schatz. These productive meetings provided valuable opportunities to discuss key issues facing the state's emergency communications system, share local perspectives, and highlight ongoing challenges and needs. As a result, the State of Hawaii 9-1-1 Board successfully garnered bipartisan support from all officials present, strengthen partnerships and advancing efforts to improve and modernize Hawaii's 9-1-1 infrastructure.



"We do this for all 9-1-1 professionals. Make your voices heard, share with everyone that your position works hand in hand with police, fire and medical crews. If you are not there to answer the call, who will dispatch them to respond to help others. You answer the call, dispatch everyone and coordinate every effort to save lives and property. You are 9-1-1!"

*– Davlynn Racadio –
Emergency Services Dispatch
Coordinator*

"Let's continue to fight for all 9-1-1 professionals, the heroes behind the headset who are there for you on the worst day of your life—ready to answer the most difficult call you may ever have to make."

*– Melia Johnson – Supervising
Emergency Services Dispatcher*



"The 9-1-1 Board Goes to Washington turns the nation's capital into a lifeline for our communities connecting front-line dispatchers with the policy makers who shape the laws that keep Hawaii's islands safe. By speaking directly with elected officials, we turn everyday emergency calls into a powerful voice for legislation, funding and the recognition our telecommunications deserve."

-Stephen Courtney – Hawaii 9-1-1 Board Member & Deputy Director, Department of Information Technology for City & County of Honolulu

"We pursue this because our 9-1-1 professionals are the unseen heroes whose calm voices and swift actions form the critical first link in every emergency response, turning moments of crisis into opportunities for life-saving intervention and coordinating police, fire, and medical teams with precision and compassion. We deeply value and appreciate their unwavering dedication, resilience under pressure, and daily commitment to protecting our communities—without them, help would never arrive when it matters most."

-Sandor Finkey – Major, Hawaii Police Department

"9-1-1 is the critical link between the public and emergency service responders. We are your lifeline in emergency situations and the calm voice in the chaos. Support 9-1-1 reclassification!"

– Jonalyn Kaulu De Soto – Police Communications Officer II

"You may not see my face, but you hear my voice. The calm voice in dark times. Your life matters to me. 9-1-1 Professionals saves Lives."

– Lehua Montez – Police Communications Officer II

Enhancing First Response Act (S.725)

The Enhancing First Response Act (S.725) requires the Office of Management and Budget to update the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Standard Occupational Classification System to categorize 9-1-1 Public Safety Professionals as a Protective Service Occupation.

The bill passed the Senate unanimously on September 9, 2025, and awaits approval by the House. Representatives from the State of Hawaii 9-1-1 Board and County Public Safety Answering Points have requested our elected officials to pass the bill under suspension of rules.

The bill also includes two Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reporting requirements related to Kari's Law (H.R. 5201) implementation and outage notifications (H.R. 5200). Improved post-disaster reports will provide public safety agencies with critical information to strengthen network resiliency, accelerate recovery efforts, and ensure all emergency calls are responded to when they are needed most.

Next Generation 9-1-1 Act (H.R. 6505)

Next Generation 9-1-1 Act (H.R. 6505) establishes a nationwide grant program managed by NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration) to help state, local, and tribal governments upgrade to IP-based, secure, and interoperable 9-1-1 systems.

Funding Next Generation 9-1-1 is critical to ensure that everyone, regardless of location, has access to the best possible emergency response. Next Generation 9-1-1 provides critical cybersecurity, resiliency, and interoperability.

