

**Testimony of
Chief Robert McLemore, Chairman of the State Interoperable Executive Committee
Presented to the House Committee on Government, Technology and Security
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Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the State Interoperable Executive Committee (SIEC) and this proposed bill.

The need for emergency responders to communicate with each other has always been a challenge and can effect the outcome of any emergency.

Interoperable communications provides the ability for various emergency response disciplines and multiple jurisdictions to share incident critical information in a timely, accurate and effective manner. This is one of most often cited deficiencies in post incident analysis. The larger the incident the greater occurrence for communication issues regarding interoperability.

In the mid 2000's when individual Homeland Security Regions were looking for solutions for interoperability, it was recognized that a coordinated effort was required to address the ability of different jurisdictions and disciplines to effectively communicate with each other. One result of this acknowledged need was a 2007 Governors Executive Order (07-27) establishing the SIEC. This committee was tasked with:

“evaluating the state of both current and future communications interoperability issues within the State of Kansas, create a plan for statewide communications interoperability, oversee implementation of the plan, and develop appropriate policies, procedures and guidelines.” [SIEC Charter]

The Kansas Statewide Interoperable Communications System (KSICS) is the current evolution of these efforts. This system has proven to be an indispensable asset for interoperable radio communications for every area of the State. Responders are now able to talk to each other on a common trunked radio system that is invaluable in everyday routine communications, and major disasters that have involved emergency responders from different areas of the State working together to mitigate large incidents.

The SIEC is also responsible to identify, manage and plan for the use of future technologies, this now includes Public Safety Broadband. FirstNet is a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN) that is in its beginning stages of build out. This network will provide responders with unparalleled ability to access incident critical data such as, incident video, medical telemetry, applications that manage and track resources, personnel accountability, hazardous materials information, secure law enforcement data, etc. With the current deployment of NexGen 911, PSBN will be a new tool and vital link to disseminate information from 911 dispatch centers to and from the field.

It is important to understand that the highly technical qualities that PSBN presents will require interaction with NG911, FirstNet, bordering states and a necessary interaction/partnership with the Provider AT&T. This will require additional personnel and authority to deal with negotiation, contracting and grant management in a timely manner.

For the successful development and implementation of policy, plans and procedures for PSBN and future technologies, the SIEC has determined that the establishment a more formal organization by statute would be advantageous to a successful outcome.

The need for the SIEC will not go away, and has outgrown the Executive Order that established it. A more formal governance structure would provide the management and resources needed to insure the continued success of interoperable communications in Kansas.

Thank you for your attention

Chief Robert McLemore
Chair, SIEC