

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, DC 20554**

In the Matter of )  
 )  
911 Call-Forwarding Requirements for ) PS Docket No. 08-51  
Non-Service-Initialized Phones )

**REPLY COMMENTS OF APCO**

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International, Inc. (APCO) hereby submits the following reply comments in response to the Commission’s *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)* in the above-captioned proceeding.<sup>1</sup>

Founded in 1935, APCO is the nation’s oldest and largest organization of public safety communications professionals. APCO is a non-profit association with over 23,000 members, primarily consisting of state and local government employees who manage and operate public safety communications systems – including Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), dispatch centers, emergency operations centers, radio networks, and information technology – for law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and other public safety agencies.

Upon review of the record developed thus far, APCO continues to support the Commission’s proposal to sunset the call forwarding requirement for 9-1-1 calls placed from “non-service-initialized” (NSI) devices to PSAPs. Further, the Commission should prohibit CMRS providers from forwarding 9-1-1 calls from NSI devices. APCO does not support any exceptions, whether in limited cases where a device may appear as NSI to a carrier, or in the event that service terminates because pre-paid minutes lapse or a post-paid subscriber fails to remit payment.

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<sup>1</sup> 911 Call-Forwarding Requirements for Non-Service-Initialized Phones, PS Docket No. 08-51, *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, FCC 15-43 (rel. Apr. 1, 2015).

Maintaining the status quo, as some advocate, is not the solution. The Commission has explored this issue for years, while the harm to PSAPs from abusive, harassing, and fraudulent calls has grown substantially. Public safety telecommunicators must take every call seriously. The false nature of the vast majority of NSI calls strains the limited resources of the emergency response community, especially because NSI calls aren't delivered with location information or a call-back capability. This potentially delays a response to legitimate emergencies, placing the public in greater danger.<sup>2</sup>

The record also reveals that the wireless industry has evolved to offer low-cost options for wireless services. APCO thus encourages the wireless industry to explore alternatives to NSI-to-9-1-1, particularly for the vulnerable populations who benefit most from access to wireless 9-1-1 service. Indeed, any member of the public in need of emergency assistance should have access to 9-1-1 with its full capabilities, including call-back numbers and location information which enable PSAPs to provide a more effective response.

In order to enable a safe transition from the current NSI model, whether to one based on low-cost devices or another solution, APCO would support a sufficient transition period. Although APCO initially agreed with the Commission's proposed six-month transition period, APCO would be amenable to a period of up to one year, to allow for public outreach and education, as well as efforts to make substitute devices available to those in need. However, at the end of this transition period, the Commission should sunset the rule and prohibit CMRS providers from forwarding 9-1-1 calls from NSI devices.

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<sup>2</sup> Notably, one representative of the CMRS industry expressed support for sunsetting the rule if the public safety community determines that the costs outweigh the benefits. *See* Comments of AT&T, PS Docket No. 08-51 (filed June 5, 2015). As described above, the harm caused to PSAPs outweighs the remaining benefits of preserving the current rule. *See also* Comments of the National Emergency Number Association, Comments of the National Association of State 911 Administrators.

## CONCLUSION

APCO supports the sunset of the FCC's rule requiring carriers to forward 9-1-1 calls from NSI phones consistent with its initial comments and reply comments herein.

Respectfully submitted,

APCO INTERNATIONAL

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