

Madam Chairwoman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today.

When public television stations began their investment in equipment for digital transmission in the late 1990s, we quickly realized the significant advantages that digital technology could offer to education, public health and public safety. Digital television's bandwidth can be partitioned into multiple wireless content streams, creating a system that can simultaneously serve the public in many ways. One of these ways is sending data that contains information, video, maps, and blueprints to enhance public safety.

Public television's congestion-free digital bandwidth is able to simultaneously support public alert and warning systems, as well as closed networks, to enable public safety and emergency management agencies to transmit vital information securely to personal computers; computers in police, fire, or ambulance vehicles; or computers connected to local area networks. This is done through the use of a small digital television receiver such as this **[HOLD UP RECEIVER]**. This receiver can be purchased and installed in an emergency vehicle for under \$300.

When public television approached the Department of Homeland Security with a proposal, developed in part by my station beginning in 2002, the Digital Emergency Alert System was born through a cooperative interagency agreement. Deployed nationally as part of the original DHS/FEMA IPAWS plan, the infrastructure provides for a digital presidential emergency alert and warning system to supplement the current EAS. It also serves as a foundation that could facilitate governors' and local authorities' use of the DEAS for state and local emergencies.

At Vegas PBS, we have secured grants to build out local DEAS technology to deal with school emergencies, earthquakes and other threats. We have blueprints, hazardous material locations, utility connections and other information on 400 public buildings on a server in our building. In a school situation, we can send first responders vital medical information on medically fragile students, and authorized parent or guardian information to reunification centers. We also have fiber links to the State Emergency Data Center with similar information on over 2500 critical infrastructure sites.

Other local public television stations, and the communities they serve across the country, could replicate the successes we have had in Las Vegas with the appropriate assistance from Congress.

I would like to offer two recommendations on behalf of our industry that will enhance national alert and warning and public television's capabilities in this area. First, a renewed focus on IPAWS by Congress is essential to ensure the quality and reliability of federal alert and warning. The legislation introduced by Chairman Oberstar, H.R. 3377, takes the right approach. We greatly appreciate being included in the IPAWS Modernization Advisory Committee, as public television believes that it can offer a unique perspective.

Second, the WARN Act made funding available to stations to provide the equipment necessary to send targeted messaging and to allow for better bandwidth allocation management. This will enhance stations' ability to create local alert and warning systems; however those funds are currently being held at NTIA awaiting coordination with FEMA. We urge this Committee to request that FEMA work with NTIA to expedite the release of those funds in order for public television to further build out the Digital Emergency Alert System. This week's headlines featured people who were allegedly acquiring chemicals for potential subway bombings—alert and warning cannot be subjected to further delay.

Again, thank you for inviting me today to describe public television's alert and warning capabilities and current innovations. I look forward to answering any questions.