

As a local police chief, in a relatively small community (population 13,500), I found the 911 communications critically endangered on the June 29 storm in Ohio. I believe that the FCC and other federal entities need to quickly put a halt to the theory that consolidating 911 services within counties is a "good" idea. In fact, I believe the derecho of June 29 serves as notice that placing critical infrastructure facilities all in one building is a horrible idea. If that facility should go down, it is impossible for 911 calls to be answered, and EMS/Police services rendered.

I am currently being pushed by my Council to move towards Consolidation, but I refuse to do so because of public safety interests, not budget interests. I believe it is time for money flow to go back to local communities that have to pay for such services, instead of paying to group up emergency services as a way to save money. In the long run, our country's safety is at risk.

Public safety should not be mixed up with dangerous political hot topics such as 911 centers, where all 911 services are positioned into one facility. This is a popular idea, but not well thought out most of the time. In Ohio, there is a growing concern that if you consolidate, you will get more federal dollars to back up that consolidation. This is a horrible way to do business. The dollars should be going to communities, such as mine, that have fought to keep tax dollars used wisely and towards public safety as much as possible. We should be able to apply for federal funds and receive funding without joining up with the local sheriff's office to make it happen. The local police and local sheriff's offices have 911 dispatching capabilities currently, but because the State of Ohio and the Federal government have pushed consolidating as many things as possible in an effort to control spending, we will lose our security of our communities in the long run.

I am very passionate about this issue, if you can't tell, and fail to see anything positive coming out of consolidation of emergency services.

Thanks for your time, and please feel free to contact me further at (937)599-1010 with any questions.