

I am writing in support of RM-11699.

I am an amateur radio operator (W4PHS) and MARS member who has focused my efforts primarily toward emergency communication. I have taken ICS courses up to and including COML and COMT, and I have taught an introduction to ICS to other amateur radio operators. I volunteer my time to develop software related to emergency communication support for agencies, and I am in constant communication with agency communication leaders. I provided emergency communication support during the major flood we had in Nashville a couple of years ago.

During major incidents such as the Nashville flood, amateur radio operators fill a vital role providing a communication link between agencies, refugee shelters, rural hospitals and other sites. During these operations it is often necessary to send casualty and medical information about the people in the facilities being served. Due to HIPAA regulations as well as common courtesy, this information cannot be transmitted unencrypted. So I believe it is essential for the wellbeing of those being cared for that amateurs be able to encrypt the information for situations like this.

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