



**STATEMENT OF T-MOBILE, CONNECTICUT**

**Regarding Raised Bill No. 354**

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENHANCED EMERGENCY 9-1-1 PROGRAM**

**Before the Joint Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding**

**March 12, 2012**

**Proposal:**

Raised Bill No. 354 would amend existing Connecticut law to place the existing emergency 911 fee imposed on wireless customers who receive a monthly bill on retail purchasers of prepaid wireless services to pay for the enhanced E911 program.

**Comments:**

T-Mobile fully supports Raised Bill No. 354, which applies the current E911 fee to customers of prepaid wireless services, who are not paying the E911 fee today. T-Mobile appreciates your consideration of voting for this bill.

The current statute directing wireless telecommunications service providers to collect the E911 fee from our customers was crafted at a time when prepaid wireless customers were a very small fraction of the overall wireless subscriber base. Unfortunately, the law was written only to apply to customers who receive a monthly bill, also known as "postpaid" subscribers. Unlike postpaid subscribers, prepaid wireless customers do not receive a monthly bill but instead purchase wireless services and refill their accounts at retail locations, via the Internet, or over their phone. The only opportunity to collect the E911 fee from the prepaid customer is at the point of sale, but there has been no legal authority or collection and remittance methodology to do so. Raised Bill No. 354 will accomplish these three goals: 1) authorize retailers to assess the E911 fee at the point of sale for prepaid customers, 2) allow the retailer who collects a prepaid wireless E911 fee to retain a percentage to offset any administrative burden, and 3) permit the prepaid E911 fees collected at the point of sale to be included in the current E911 system.

As consumer demand for wireless services has changed, the prepaid segment of the market has grown rapidly. It is estimated that prepaid customers now make up nearly 20% of the total wireless customer base. The number of customers choosing to purchase service on a prepaid basis is growing and accordingly the laws need to "catch up" to this market segment. Without the passage of Raised Bill No. 354, current prepaid wireless customers will benefit from the E911 system at no cost. The wireless industry and public safety representatives have worked for a number of years to resolve this funding gap and developed the mutually agreeable and nationally sought solution embodied by Raised Bill No. 354. This measure will benefit all citizens of Connecticut by assuring availability of our critical emergency communications networks.

**Conclusion:**

T-Mobile supports Raised Bill No. 354.