



NTIA Awards a \$1.4 Million Grant to Connecticut To Assist in FirstNet Planning

The state's Broadband Policy Coordinator, a principal attorney at the Office of Consumer Counsel and a member of the state's *Connecticut Public Safety Interoperable Executive Committees Broadband Working Group*, worked with the CT Department of Public Safety's "State Wireless Interoperability Coordinator" (SWIC) on the state's application to the U.S. Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for federal funding to jumpstart the creation of the first nationwide broadband network for public safety, the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet).

The U.S. Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced on July 24, 2013 that it has awarded the maximum award allowable for Connecticut, \$1.4 million for this first phase of the project, allocated on a rolling basis pursuant to a formula capping the award based on the state's population and area. On the basis of Connecticut's extensive public safety wireless infrastructure and established wireless interoperability governance procedures and out of the 56 U.S. states and territories eligible to apply for the grants, Connecticut was chosen among the first five states to receive funding.

In this first set of grant awards under the program, the NTIA awarded the first \$13.1 million in grants to Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, New York and Ohio, to support state planning, consultation and outreach activities of these states as they prepare for the launch of the first nationwide public safety broadband network. This funding will support the first phase of the project, focusing on such activities as expanding existing governance bodies to consult with FirstNet, conducting education and outreach to relevant stakeholders, and identifying potential public safety users. Phase two will focus on additional consultations with FirstNet and data collection activities, building on broadband data collections that have already been started as part of the state Broadband Policy Coordinator's NTIA grant project.

The Working Group has every expectation that our efforts will lead to Connecticut being the most advanced state in the country in the FirstNet project.