

May 15, 2025

Contact Information

For this story and Iowa NENA/Iowa APCO

Contact: Chris Jasper, President – Iowa NENA

Contact: Todd Malone, President – Iowa APCO

E-mail: iaapconena@gmail.com

Iowa 911 Professionals Warn: Last-Minute Legislation Threatens Public Safety

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: The Iowa Chapters of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) are sounding the alarm over a quietly passed provision in the final hour of the 2025 legislative session that threatens to destabilize 911 operations across the state and compromise public safety for all Iowans.

Division XII, Section 42 of the standings appropriations bill—now enacted as **Iowa Code Section 34A.12**—grants the Iowa 911 Program the authority to charge local 911 service boards for undefined “reasonable costs” associated with delivering 911 traffic to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). These costs must be paid within 30 days of billing, with no clarity on the amounts, timing, or billing process.

“Not only was this provision passed in the middle of the night without stakeholder input, the legislature had previously failed to advance it out of a full committee in the House,” said Chris Jasper, President of Iowa NENA. “There are serious unintended consequences for every Iowan if this law takes effect. Local 911 boards and dispatch centers already operate on razor-thin budgets. Surprise bills from the state could lead to staffing cuts, delayed equipment upgrades, and slower emergency response—especially in rural communities.”

Iowa APCO and NENA, representing the front-line professionals who ensure emergency calls are answered, routed, and supported by life-saving technology, are urging Governor Kim Reynolds to veto this legislation and work collaboratively with local stakeholders to ensure a fair, sustainable path forward for Iowa’s emergency communication system.

“We fully support statewide 911 system improvements—but not at the expense of local readiness,” Jasper added. “This law is an unfunded mandate that threatens to undermine Iowa’s emergency communications network when Iowans need it most.”

Throughout the 2025 session, APCO and NENA engaged with lawmakers in a transparent, solutions-focused manner, seeking clarity and fairness in any statewide policy changes to 911 operations. This last-minute provision—Division XII: Emergency Communication Services in Senate File 659—circumvents that process and undermines that collaboration.

APCO and NENA remain committed to partnering with the state to modernize Iowa’s 911 infrastructure but will continue to advocate fiercely for the local dispatch centers that serve as Iowa’s first, first responders.