



San Diego County Sheriff's Department

Post Office Box 939062 • San Diego, California 92193-9062



William D. Gore, Sheriff

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Letter to the Editor
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9-1-1 is an essential public safety service that everyone hopes and expects will work when needed. However, our 9-1-1 system needs to be modernized in order to keep our communities and first responders safe.

To pay for our 9-1-1 system, the state has been relying on an antiquated funding model. A fee has been assessed on landline-based voice calls within California. However, because of new technology and ways of connecting with our friends and family, this model no longer fully meets our funding needs.

The current system disproportionately relies on those who use landlines to fund 9-1-1 access. The main users of landlines in California are the elderly and rural residents, many of whom lack cell coverage. The state has a responsibility to equitably distribute the costs of an essential service that is available to all. The State Legislature is currently considering AB 1836/SB 870, which would update the state's 9-1-1 funding model to correct inequities in the current model by imposing a surcharge on landline, cell phone and Voice Over IP (VoIP) phones while both modernizing and sustaining our 9-1-1 system for the next 30 years.

The state will be able to upgrade the 9-1-1 system, enhancing public safety for all. These upgrades, such as Text-to-911 and Video-to-911, will allow individuals with emergencies to text or send videos to our dispatchers for help. A child home alone during a break-in can get the help he or she needs without giving away their hiding place. A person in an abusive situation can discretely reach out for help without additionally aggravating his or her attacker.

Many people are unaware of their address when they call. This Next-Generation 9-1-1 system will be able to more accurately obtain your location information. This upgrade will save valuable minutes so critical when responding to emergencies such as a heart attack or an active shooter.

As the primary responder to 9-1-1 calls, law enforcement understands how critical 9-1-1 is to the safety of those we serve. I vowed to protect and serve my community and that is why I am encouraging California lawmakers to vote yes on AB 1836/SB 870.

Sincerely,

William D. Gore, Sheriff