



EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMITTEE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

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Association

November 22, 2010

The Honorable John M. Gioia, Chair
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
651 Pine Street
Martinez, CA 94553

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CLERK BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CONTRA COSTA CO.

Dear Supervisor Gioia and Members of the Board:

This letter is to urge your Board's continuing support for maintaining the countywide 9-1-1 system at a state-of-the-art level. At a recent meeting of your Emergency Medical Care Committee, we learned that implementation of recent technological changes enabling cellular 9-1-1 callers to be connected directly with the appropriate local Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) has been completed for the Sheriff's Communication Center and for most city PSAP's in Contra Costa.

Previously, all cellular 9-1-1 calls were initially directed to a single California Highway Patrol (CHP) PSAP in Vallejo. This plan made sense in the early days of cellular telephone when most calls were placed from automobiles and when the location of cellular callers could not be identified. The explosive growth in cellular telephone usage overwhelmed the CHP answering point to the extent that it was not uncommon for callers at certain times of day to be placed on hold for extensive periods. New technology now enables most cellular telephone calls to be located with some precision so that the call can be automatically routed to the PSAP for the jurisdiction in which the call is placed.

Technology in the telephone communications field is continuing to advance at a rapid pace. Along with technological advances are changes in the culture of telephone use such as text messaging and video transmission. The 9-1-1 system is the vital link between the public and the public safety emergency response system. Our goal is to assure that 9-1-1 services throughout Contra Costa County provide efficient, time sensitive, and user-friendly access to appropriate emergency response.

Sincerely,

Kacey Hansen, Chair

cc: Each Member of the Board of Supervisors
Emergency Medical Care Committee members
Clerk of the Board
Sheriff Warren Rupf
William B. Walker, MD, Health Services Director
Art Lathrop, EMS Director

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CC: BOS
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