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Contact:

Harlin R. McEwen
PSST Chairman
607-227-1664
chiefhrm@pubsaf.com

**PSST Chairman Testifies Before the U. S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet**

WASHINGTON, DC – April 15, 2008 – Today the Public Safety Spectrum Trust released a copy of the oral testimony of PSST Chairman Harlin R. McEwen. A copy of Chief McEwen's written testimony can be found on the PSST website at <http://www.psst.org>.

HOW TO DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS
THE D BLOCK SOLUTION

Thank you, Chairman Markey, Ranking Member Stearns and distinguished Members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Harlin McEwen. I am the retired Police Chief for the City of Ithaca, New York, and am retired as a Deputy Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, DC. I also serve as Chairman of the Communications and Technology Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, a position I have held for almost 30 years.

Most recently, I was honored to have been elected as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Safety Spectrum Trust, and the Board has also named me as the interim Chief Executive Officer. The Public Safety Spectrum Trust is a non-profit corporation. Its purpose is to serve as licensee for the 700 MHz radio spectrum allocated by the FCC for public safety broadband purposes. The Public Safety Broadband License was granted to the PSST by the FCC on November 19, 2007. The 10 MHz of public safety broadband spectrum is intended to be one half of the spectrum that will be used to develop a shared commercial/public safety network. The other half of the spectrum will come from the so-called D Block.

I and the other members of the Board of Directors of the PSST take our duty very seriously, and I appear today on behalf of not only the PSST, but also the local, tribal, state and federal public safety community we serve.

First, I am sure each of you knows why having a national public safety broadband network is so important, and we applaud the efforts of the Committee members and other members of Congress for your support in the creation of this network. Any review of major crises such as 911 or Katrina shows how much the personal efforts and effectiveness of our nation's first responders – police, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and others - are undermined when the communications infrastructure that supports our efforts fails or is insufficient for the needs of public safety professionals. We need to move to broadband technology, but we also need a network that for public safety is more reliable than

today's commercial networks, hardened to withstand catastrophes like Katrina, that has extended back-up power, priority for public safety, enhanced security features and a satellite component that does not exist in current commercial networks. Establishing and building out the public safety broadband network will be a significant challenge, but it is one that very much needs to be done to meet our national security and public safety needs for the years to come.

We were deeply disappointed that the D Block did not attract a winning bid in the recently concluded 700 MHz auction but the PSST is committed to working with the FCC to develop the rules for a follow-on D Block auction that will result in a winning bidder and also meet the critical communications needs of the public safety community. We welcome any suggestions from Congress and members of this Committee to help us ensure that failure is not an option in a D Block re-auction.

The FCC's Second Report and Order assigns important tasks to the PSST as the public safety broadband licensee to ensure that the needs of first responders are met. These tasks include working with the D block winner to develop and construct a network that meets public safety's critical communications needs, at the outset, over the entire term of the 10 year license, and into the future. Public safety's needs, and technology available to meet those needs, will not remain static. There will be a continuing need for input from the public safety community with regard to network upgrades being implemented by the commercial operator. We see the PSST in a continuing role as the public safety representative in these matters.

The responsibilities expected of the PSST have not been matched by an appropriate source of funding. The FCC order did not and could not provide funding for the Public Safety Broadband Licensee. There is no allocation in existing law – nor in pending legislation – for the funding to meet the PSST's needs. In the total absence of conventional funding alternatives, the PSST has suggested that the commercial D block operator be the principal source of funding through some type of lease as is set forth in the FCC Report and Order.

In conclusion, we in the public safety community wish to applaud the efforts of the FCC as reaffirmed in their testimony this morning, of members of this Committee and of Congress for their support of the public safety broadband network and the public/private partnership approach.

We look forward to working with this Committee to make the public safety broadband network a reality in the near future. You can count on us for flexibility, focus on solutions and dedication to our one goal – an effective broadband communications network available to meet the needs of public safety in providing critical first responder services to our nation.

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