



WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS
UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION
383 Broadway
Fort Edward, NY 12828



February 23, 2015

Governor Peter Shumlin
State of Vermont
109 State Street, Pavilion
Montpelier, VT 05609

Dear Governor Shumlin,

We are writing to share our support for the Vermont State Police - Rutland Public Safety Answering Point and the staff who work diligently to support its operations and the many Public Safety agencies that border our county. The Rutland PSAP is our neighboring PSAP to the east, bordering those we serve, and many cellular 9-1-1 calls originating in the area of the New York / Vermont border between our county and Vermont have been routed through the Rutland PSAP, due to the close proximity.

We have always considered the Rutland PSAP as our brothers and sisters in the 9-1-1 realm, covering communications for many different situations, both emergency and non-emergency, that occur in the communities along our common border. The Rutland PSAP and staff have been vital in assisting our PSAP staff and responders in many incidents in which their local knowledge of the communities, businesses, and residents of the areas they serve. We serve as the main dispatch point for a number of fire companies along the state border in Vermont, specifically; Dorset and East Dorset, Fair Haven, Middletown Springs, Pawlet, Poultney, Rupert, Wells and West Pawlet fire departments and the Poultney Rescue Squad.


Being that we provide first alarm dispatching services to these departments, as well as agencies from Washington County for emergency calls for service in nearby Vermont communities when needed, a PSAP and staff who are accustomed to the responders, areas, and members of the public alike are vital to ensure the best possible response, route of travel, available resources, and coordination of necessities at an incident.


A change in PSAP coverage / location and personnel for our neighbors and those agencies who serve parts of nearby Vermont, or are Vermont agencies we assist in dispatching services for, would drastically change the current dynamics of the public safety system as it is currently for all involved, including the bordering New York State residents and our PSAP and staff as well.

We feel that closing the Rutland PSAP will be an extreme detriment to the Public Safety of the citizens of southwestern Vermont, as well as citizens of New York who may be serviced by Vermont cell towers and be routed to a Vermont PSAP. The current Rutland dispatchers are familiar with the border region and can seamlessly route calls for service to Washington County without time consuming research to figure out where the call for service is.

How in the span of one year can the Vermont PSAPs go from being at or above capacity, to the following year being able to cut the number of PSAPs in half?

The Washington County Communications Officers unequivocally support our brother and sister dispatchers from the Rutland and Derby PSAPs, and do not understand how closing Rutland and Derby and attempting to balance the budget on the backs of Public Safety can be in the best interest of anyone.


Ashlee J. Zinn
Union Steward


David J. T. Chambers
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