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To: Ann Pugh <APUGH@leg.state.vt.us>

Cc: Julie Tucker <JTucker@leg.state.vt.us>

Subject: Silver Alert's use in 20 other states + suggested draft language changes from VT Broadcasters

Good Afternoon Madam Chair and Julie,

Over the weekend, I heard back from 20 other state broadcasters associations about how Silver Alerts are structured in their states as well as what they are called, if they have something like it at all. I gathered as much information into the attached Excel spreadsheet as I could. I hope the House Human Services Committee finds this research helpful.

If you don't have time to read the whole Excel document, here are the two takeaways;

1. No matter what the state calls it, none of them utilize the EAS system. They use the communication channels already established and used by Law Enforcement to disseminate missing persons information, which includes communicating information with TV and radio station. A lot of them quote the same reason I testified about on Friday; fear of listener/viewer fatigue of the EAS tones. (In other words, if they are used too often, people won't pay any attention to them at all).
2. I'm not sure any state's legislature can mandate the use of the Emergency Alert System as it is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which states that ["stations deliver local alerts on a voluntary basis and are only required to provide the capability for the POTUS to address the public during a national emergency."](#) In other words, stations do not relay EAS message because they are required to. They do it because it is in the best interest of the communities they serve.

The Vermont Association of Broadcasters will likely support any suggested changes to H.530's draft language made by the Vermont State Police. If VSP do not offer any proposed revisions, the broadcasters ask that your committee consider making the following changes:

Page 2 Lines 14 & 15: Replace "or who has a psychiatric disability, developmental disability" with "with dementia or other cognitive impairment"

Page 3 Line 1: Replace "over the Vermont Emergency Alert System" with "using an effective communications protocol to be determined by the Department"

Page 3 Line 6: Replace "broadcast" with "alert"

Page 3 Lines 9, 10, 11: Replace "sent to the Federal Communications Commission designated state Emergency Alert System Broadcaster in Vermont. Participating radio and television stations shall broadcast the alert at intervals established by the Department" with "circulated through communication channels determined to be most appropriate by the department. This may include voluntary broadcast of the alert by television and radio stations, cable system operators, Department of Transportation, Department of Liquor and Lottery, department social media pages or VT Alert mobile phone messages."

Page 4 Lines 2 & 3: Replace "the Federal Communications Commission designated state Emergency Alert System Broadcaster in Vermont" with "all communications channels utilized at the discretion of the department".