

Resolution to support an extension of the cellular analog "AMPS" sunset date

*Offered by:
Simplex Grinnell*

Whereas, analog cellular or "AMPS" alarm radios are utilized to summon help in more than one million alarm systems in the United States and;

Whereas, hundreds of thousands of family households and individuals including senior citizens, disabled Americans, victims of domestic violence and other vulnerable populations rely on AMPS alarm radios to report fires, burglaries, medical emergencies and dangerous carbon monoxide levels and;

Whereas, thousands of commercial businesses and hundreds of critical infrastructures such as airports, Departments of Defense and Homeland Security facilities, federal courthouses, public ports and dams rely on AMPS alarm radios to send such alarm signals in a mode that is less vulnerable to sabotage than other communications channels, thereby furthering homeland security, and;

Whereas for these customers and others, the termination of AMPS service would result in a loss of protection from fire, burglary, medical and other emergencies because their alarm signals would no longer reach the alarm service provider until it is able to replace the analog radio with a digital alarm unit and;

Whereas, the Federal Communications Commission has scheduled the termination of the requirement that cellular carriers provide AMPS service for February 18, 2008, with the understanding that this date may have to be extended under certain circumstances.

Whereas, digital alarm units have only recently been produced in significant quantities so that a meaningful analog to digital "swap out" program could be initiated by alarm service providers and;

Whereas, according to recent estimates, a complete "swap out" prior to the February 18, 2008 sunset date is not feasible given the time needed to replace more than a million radios and;

Whereas, there are still several areas throughout the country where adequate digital service is not available, thus thousands of customers will be left without fire protection services if the sunset date is not extended to allow for more complete digital coverage and;

Whereas, if AMPS is terminated before the digital replacement radios can be installed, many AMPS alarm radios will cause their related alarm systems to enter into "failure" mode, creating loud alarm tones that will continue until the radio is replaced or disabled; and

Whereas, the Federal Communications Commission has an obligation to consider the legitimate and pressing public safety concerns caused by the impending AMPS sunset date and;

Whereas, the Federal Communication Commission has the statutory authority and considerable precedent to support an extension of the AMPS sunset date and;

Whereas, providing a reasonable extension of the AMPS sunset date to allow for a complete “swap out” of analog alarm radios with digital alarm radios will protect the safety of individuals, businesses, government and critical infrastructure;

Now, let it therefore be resolved that the Congressional Fire Service Institute National Advisory Committee believes that the Federal Communications Commission should grant a two year extension to the AMPS sunset date and;

Be it furthermore resolved, that the Congressional Fire Services Institute National Advisory Committee urges the Federal Communications Commission to grant this deadline extension immediately to clarify the timing, scope and scale of how the alarm industry will marshal the resources needed for best faith efforts to ensure that all customers are protected.