

Date of Hearing: April 20, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

Adam Gray, Chair

AB 1564 (Williams) – As Amended March 17, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Emergency services: wireless 911 calls: routing

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and county coordinators to review the states routing of 911 calls. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires CalOES to take all necessary actions to maximize the efficiency of the 911 system.
- 2) Requires CalOES to require its Public Safety Communications Division to work with the CHP and county coordinators to conduct an annual comprehensive statewide review and routing decision making process to review call data on the routing of 911 cell phone traffic.
- 3) Authorizes a local fire, police, sheriff, or emergency medical services agency, or a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), to submit a written request for a review of a specific cell sector, as specified.
- 4) Requires CalOES to require its Public Safety Communications Division to work with wireless carriers to verify that all cell sector routing decisions, as specified, have been implemented.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes CalOES by the Governor's Reorganization Plan No.2, operative July 1, 2013.
- 2) Requires CalOES to perform a variety of duties with respect to specified emergency preparedness, mitigation, and response activities in the state, including emergency medical services.
- 3) Provides, under the Warren-911 Emergency Assistance Act (Warren-911 Act), a local public agency to adopt a plan to implement a 911 emergency telephone response system, and establishes the State 911 Advisory Board.
- 4) Requires a provider of commercial mobile radio service to provide access to the local emergency telephone systems described in the Warren-911 Act and requires 911 to be the primary access number for those emergency systems.
- 5) Requires a provider of commercial mobile radio service, in accordance with all applicable Federal Communication Commission orders, to transmit all 911 calls from technologically compatible commercial mobile radio service communication devices without requiring user validation or any similar procedure.
- 6) Prohibits a provider of commercial mobile radio service from charging any airtime, access, or similar usage charge for any 911 call placed from a commercial mobile radio service telecommunications device to a local emergency telephone system.

- 7) Authorizes a 911 call from a commercial mobile radio service telecommunications device to be routed to a PSAP other than the CHP only if the alternate routing meets all of the following requirements:
- a) The 911 call originates from a location other than from a freeway, under the jurisdiction of the CHP.
  - b) The alternate routing is economically and technologically feasible.
  - c) The alternate routing will benefit public safety and reduce burdens on dispatchers for the CHP.
  - d) The CHP, Cal OES, and the proposed alternate PSAP, in consultation with the wireless industry, providers of 911 selective routing service, and local law enforcement officials, determine that it is in the best interest of the public and will provide more effective emergency service to the public to route 911 calls that do not originate from a freeway under the jurisdiction of the CHP to another PSAP.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:**

Purpose of the bill: According to the author, it is imperative that the State of California perform a review of its 911 emergency communications system policies and procedures, to make changes that reflect technology available now and in the near future, and to make plans to improve the 911 system in order to protect lives. The author states, "When someone calls 911, every second counts and it is alarming that, in an age where cell phones are so prevalent in our society, our 911 systems are not able to pinpoint a callers location. We need to fix our systems so no more lives are lost to senseless delays."

Background: In 1973, the Legislature passed the Warren-911 Act, which established California's 911 emergency telephone response system. Before the Warren-911 Act, the state had thousands of different emergency phone numbers, and its telephone exchange boundaries and central offices service areas were not designed to consider public safety and political boundaries. The Warren-911 Act provided for a single, primary three-digit emergency number through which emergency service could be quickly and efficiently obtained, making it less difficult for law enforcement and other public service personal to locate and provide emergency services.

When the Warren-911 Act was enacted, 911 emergency calls were made primarily on landlines. A call would be routed to a PSAP and the dispatcher would dispatch emergency services to the location accordingly. As mobile phones were introduced, mobile 911 calls were routed to a CHP dispatch, because most early mobile phones were in cars and the assumption was that calls being made from a mobile device were primarily to report issues on roadways. As mobile devices became more common, and the use of landlines decreased, more 911 calls were being made from mobile devices than landlines. By 2015, 25 million 911 calls were being made each year and 80% of those calls were coming from mobile devices. Currently, California has approximately 458 PSAPs, which handle 51% of the states 911 calls, while 25 CHP PSAPs handle the remaining 49%.

CalOES: The Public Safety Communications Office within CalOES administers the state 911 system, reviews local PSAPs' 911 equipment and operations, and reimburses their reasonable costs for planning, implementation, and maintenance of approved 911 systems. In 2013, this office was transferred from the California Technology Agency to CalOES as part of budget action. The California Emergency Number Association represents the state's PSAPs and provides research, planning, and training to support 911 dispatchers and the state 911 system. A state 911 Advisory Board advises CalOES on operation, funding, and long-range planning for PSAPs and the state 911

911 Wireless Routing: There are approximately 300,000 wireless antennas in California. Under current law, 911 calls from a mobile device may be routed to a PSAP other than the CHP if the alternate routing meets all of the following requirements:

- a) The 911 call originates from a location other than from a freeway;
- b) The alternate routing is economically and technologically feasible;
- c) The alternate routing will benefit public safety and reduce burdens on CHP dispatchers; and
- d) The CHP, Cal OES, and the proposed alternate PSAP, in consultation with the wireless industry, providers of 911 selective routing service, and local law enforcement officials, determine that it is in the best interest of the public and will provide more effective emergency service to the public to route 911 calls that do not originate from a freeway to another PSAP.

When a 911 call is made from a mobile device, the call is routed to an antenna on a cell tower. Each antenna is assigned an Emergency Service Number which determines the PSAP that will handle the call. Hence, calls made from one antenna's coverage area might directly be referred to a local PSAP, whereas, another may be referred to a CHP dispatch depending on the antenna.

911 callers using a mobile device that are forwarded to a CHP PSAP are queried until their location is determined by the CHP. The call is then transferred to a local dispatch center. This has often resulted in delays of the arrival of emergency services and on some occasions, such delays have resulted in serious injury or death.

Misrouting of 911 Calls: According to the author, there are currently significant problems with California's 911 system including: misrouting of calls to incorrect PSAPs, sometimes in different cities or regions, and inaccurate caller location information. The author points to an incident in 2014, in which a 911 emergency call made in Santa Barbara was routed to Ventura CHP instead. Inaccurate location information given from CHP to the local dispatch further delayed the call resulted in a 20 minute delay in the arrival of medical care. Furthermore, following the 2014 shooting in Isla Vista, CA, in August 2015 test calls made from Isla Vista revealed that cell sites were still routing calls to Ventura CHP instead of a local dispatch.

Support: According to the California Professional Firefighters, "When lives are on the line, every second counts. This is especially true, for example, in instances where an individual sustains a cardiac arrest – a sudden condition that can be fatal if not treated within a few minutes. By clarifying the process by which an alternate PSAP is selected, as proposed by this bill, people in emergency situations will be able to reach the most efficient emergency responders the first

time, thereby potentially shaving minutes off of response times. Consequently, AB 1564 aids in dramatically improving lifesaving outcomes for those who call 9-1-1."

Double Referral: This bill was first heard in Assembly Committee on Utilities and Commerce and passed on a 15-0 vote.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

American Heart Association  
American Medical Response  
American Stroke Association  
California Ambulance Association  
California Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians  
California Fire Chiefs Association  
California Peace Officers' Association  
California Professional Firefighters  
California State Sheriffs' Association  
County of Santa Barbara  
Emergency Medical Services Administrators Association of California  
Emergency Medical Services Medical Directors Association of California  
Fire Chiefs Association of Santa Barbara County  
Fire Districts Association of California  
League of California Cities

**Opposition**

None on file

**Analysis Prepared by:** Kenton Stanhope / G.O. / (916) 319-2531