

**Opening Statement**  
**The Honorable Judy Biggert (R-IL)**  
Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation  
*Progress on P25: Furthering Opportunity and Competition for Public Safety Radio Equipment*  
Committee on Science and Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
September 23, 2010

Thank you, Chairman Wu, for calling today's hearing on the interoperability of public safety communications equipment - specifically Project 25, or P25, standards.

A previous hearing on this topic in May highlighted the fact that though the Project 25 (P25) process has been ongoing for more than 20 years, progress on standards for communications interoperability has been slow. Today's hearing will focus on the process to ensure that communications equipment not only incorporates the existing P25 standards, but also performs at the level anticipated by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the other stakeholders developing the standards. I hope we will also learn about the P25 standards that have not been fully completed and about how we can encourage the advancement of that process.

One of the challenges faced by improving public communication interoperability is the inherent friction between our free market system and the desire for multi-vendor equipment to work seamlessly together. In the interest of public safety it is obvious that first responders must have functional, interoperable equipment. The public expects that in times of emergency – whether it is fire, a crippling winter snow storm, or a terrorist attack -- that public safety communications will work across geography and jurisdiction without a hitch. But when public safety agencies and vendors do not work closely together on standards conformance, the end result may be equipment that works perfectly in some situations, but fails miserably in others.

I look forward to learning more about the standards-setting process and how we can encourage innovation, competition, and truly interoperable products available to the men and women working so hard to protect our public safety.

With that, thank you again Chairman Wu, and welcome to our witnesses. I look forward to a informative hearing and I yield back the balance of my time.