MAYORS PRAISE APPOINTMENT OF HOUSTON MAYOR ANNISE PARKER, SALT LAKE CITY POLICE CHIEF CHRIS BURBANK TO FIRSTNET BOARD

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson and USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran issued the following statements today after this afternoon’s announcement that Houston Mayor Annise D. Parker, Chair of the Conference of Mayors Committee on Criminal and Social Justice, and Salt Lake City Police Chief Chris Burbank have been appointed to the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) Board of Directors:

“America’s mayors commend the Obama Administration for making sure that cities and their public safety communications needs will be well represented on the national board responsible for overseeing the planning, development, maintenance and operation of the nationwide wireless public safety communications network.

“By appointing Mayor Parker, who has been our leader on this issue since legislation to develop the nationwide public safety broadband network and establish FirstNet was first proposed, Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker has recognized the important contribution which an experienced and successful mayor can bring to the work of this Board.

“She follows former Denver Mayor and Conference President Wellington Webb who has done an outstanding job on the FirstNet Board over the last two years and made sure that the interests of the nation’s cities and first responders were taken into account in its deliberations,” said USCM President Johnson.

Johnson also praised the appointment Salt Like City Police Chief Chris Burbank to the Board: “It is critically important that police chiefs be represented on the Board and we know that Chief Burbank will do an outstanding job of making sure that law enforcement needs are taken into account in the work of the Board.”

“"The Conference of Mayors has always been committed to making sure that mayors’ interests and concerns are well represented in the federal government,” commented Conference of Mayors Executive Director and CEO Tom Cochran. “Mayor Parker will be a great member of the FirstNet Board and a great representative of the mayors of this nation,” Cochran continued.

The 15-member FirstNet Board of Directors was authorized through the public safety broadband communications provisions of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, which was signed by the President on February 22, 2012. The law requires that at least three of the board’s members represent state and local governments, tribes and territories, and that at least three others have served as public safety professionals. The law focuses on the reallocation of critical spectrum – the so-called D Block of the 700 MHz – to public safety and funding for the development, maintenance and operation of the network.

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