

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2696

To establish the United States Homeland Security Signal Corps to ensure proper communications between law enforcement agencies.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 20, 2004

Mr. SCHUMER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish the United States Homeland Security Signal Corps to ensure proper communications between law enforcement agencies.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “U.S. Homeland Secu-
5 rity Signal Act of 2004”.

6 **SEC. 2. HOMELAND SECURITY SIGNAL CORPS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title V of the Homeland Security
8 Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 311 et seq.) is amended by adding
9 at the end the following:

1 **“SEC. 510. HOMELAND SECURITY SIGNAL CORPS.**

2 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established, within
3 the Directorate of Emergency Preparedness and Re-
4 sponse, a Homeland Security Signal Corps (referred to in
5 this section as the ‘Signal Corps’).

6 “(b) PERSONNEL.—The Signal Corps shall be com-
7 prised of specially trained police officers, firefighters,
8 emergency medical technicians, and other emergency per-
9 sonnel.

10 “(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Signal Corps shall—

11 “(1) ensure that first responders can commu-
12 nicate with one another, mobile command centers,
13 headquarters, and the public at disaster sites or in
14 the event of a terrorist attack or a national crisis;

15 “(2) provide sufficient training and equipment
16 for fire and police units to enable those units to deal
17 with all threats and contingencies in any environ-
18 ment; and

19 “(3) secure joint-use equipment, such as tele-
20 communications trucks, that can access surviving
21 telephone land lines to supplement communications
22 access.

23 “(d) NATIONAL SIGNAL CORPS STANDARDS.—The
24 Signal Corps shall establish a set of standard operating
25 procedures, to be followed by signal corps throughout the
26 United States, that will ensure that first responders from

1 each Federal, State, and local agency have the methods
2 and means to communicate with, or substitute for, first
3 responders from other agencies in the event of a multi-
4 state terrorist attack or a national crisis.

5 “(e) DEMONSTRATION SIGNAL CORPS.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-
7 lish a demonstration signal corps in New York City,
8 New York, consisting of specially trained personnel
9 from the New York Police Department, the Fire De-
10 partment of New York, the New York Port Author-
11 ity, and other appropriate personnel.

12 “(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The demonstration
13 signal corps established under this subsection
14 shall—

15 “(A) ensure that ‘best of breed’ military
16 communications technology is identified and se-
17 cured for first responders;

18 “(B) ensure communications connectivity
19 between the New York Police Department and
20 the Fire Department of New York;

21 “(C) identify the means of communication
22 that work best in New York’s tunnels, sky-
23 scrapers, and subways to maintain communica-
24 tions redundancy; and

1 “(D) serve as a model for other major met-
2 ropolitan areas across the Nation.

3 “(3) TEAM CAPTAINS.—The Mayor of New
4 York City shall appoint team captains to command
5 communications companies drawn from the per-
6 sonnel described in paragraph (1).

7 “(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Signal
8 Corps Headquarters, located in Fort Monmouth,
9 New Jersey, shall provide technical assistance to the
10 demonstration signal corps.

11 “(f) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 1
12 year after the date of enactment of this section, and annu-
13 ally thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a report, to the
14 Committee on the Judiciary and the Select Committee on
15 Intelligence of the Senate and the Committee on the Judi-
16 ciary and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
17 of the House of Representatives, which outlines the
18 progress of the Signal Corps in the preceding year and
19 describes any problems, issues, or other impediments to
20 effective communication between first responders in the
21 event of a terrorist attack or a national crisis.

22 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

23 “(1) DEMONSTRATION SIGNAL CORPS.—There
24 are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000 for
25 fiscal year 2005 to carry out subsection (e).

1 “(2) FISCAL YEARS 2006 THROUGH 2009.—
2 There are authorized to be appropriated
3 \$50,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2006
4 through 2009—

5 “(A) to create signal corps in high ter-
6 rorism threat areas throughout the United
7 States; and

8 “(B) to carry out the mission of the Signal
9 Corps to assist Federal, State, and local law en-
10 forcement agencies to effectively communicate
11 with each other during a terrorism event or a
12 national crisis.”.

13 (b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 1(b) of the
14 Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–296)
15 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section
16 509 the following:

 “Sec. 510. Homeland Security Signal Corps.”.

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