



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS WAYS TO ENSURE THE OPERATIONS OF THE 911 SYSTEM AND CONTINGENCY PLANS IN CASE OF A 911 SYSTEM OUTAGE

- WHEREAS:** On June 18th, 2024, the statewide 911 system faced an outage for about two hours, preventing residents in the state from calling 911 in case of an emergencies; *and*
- WHEREAS:** During this time, residents were advised to call their local police and fire stations for emergencies, or pull the nearest fire box to notify public safety agencies; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Initial investigation indicated that the outage was due to a firewall malfunction, a feature that scans incoming packets of data, and block out any type of malware or malicious data from coming into the 911 system; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Massachusetts' 911 system is based on the same technologies that power the internet, which is called the Next Generation 911 system. This internet based system allows the calls to be rerouted if one call center is down, and let call centers communicate with each other more easily; *and*
- WHEREAS:** One benefit of a Next Generation 911 system is decentralization, where issues can be localized and not impact the whole system, therefore it is alarming to see that a malfunction with the firewall was able to cause an outage in the entire system; *and*
- WHEREAS:** We need to ensure that the 911 system has redundancies in place so that a systemwide outage will not happen again, and that each department has contingency plans in place in case of issues with the 911 system. We also need to publicize to residents ways to contact their public safety departments in case they can not dial 911;*and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss ways to ensure the operations of the 911 system and contingency plans in case of issues with the 911 system. Representatives from the Boston Police Department, Boston Fire Department, Boston EMS, the Office of Emergency Management, as well as other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed on: June 26, 2024