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Washington, D.C. -- After more than seven years of work, legislation supporting Emergency 911 services written by Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA) easily passed through the House Energy and Commerce Committee today on a unanimous vote. The legislation, introduced with Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), now moves to the House floor.

"The unanimous support of the full Energy and Commerce Committee drives home the importance of this issue which is so critical to the public safety of all Americans," Eshoo said. "Many of us buy cell phones to provide security in case of an emergency, but most Americans would be shocked to know that if they called 911 on their cell phones, only ten percent of our nation's emergency call centers would be able to precisely locate them."

Today, nearly half of all 911 calls are made on cell phones. The E-911 Implementation Act of 2003 will help ensure that the nation's public safety answering points (PSAPs) can locate all those callers with precision. The legislation accomplishes this by:

- Authorizing \$500 million in grants over five years to upgrade PSAP facilities.
- Establishing an E-911 Coordination Office at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to improve coordination among federal, state and local public safety officials.
- Penalizing states for redirecting E-911 funds collected from consumer's cell phone bills.
- Directing the FCC to further study E-911 implementation in rural areas of our country.

"This legislation will help to save lives," Eshoo continued. "Over the coming weeks, I'll be working closely with my colleagues in both parties to get this bill passed before the end of the year."

Rep. Eshoo is a Founder and Co-Chair of the Congressional E-911 Caucus along with Rep. Shimkus, Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT).

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