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January 6, 2020

The Honorable Perry E. Thurston, Jr.
The Florida Senate
404 S. Monroe Street, Room 206 SOB
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: SB 1060 Exemption/911 and E911 Communication Systems

Dear Senator Thurston:

I am writing on behalf of the First Amendment Foundation in response to SB 1060, which would create public record and meeting exemptions related to 911 and E911 emergency communication systems.

While we do not object to the proposed exemptions, we do suggest that the bill be amended to provide some sort of record, such as a recording, of those portions of meetings that would be closed under the exemption. Records of closed meetings are vitally important, allowing for oversight of the task force in the event that questions are raised about whether private discussions were limited to those allowed under the exemption. We would suggest an amendment modeled on the language in SB 1170, lines 278-292.

If you have any questions or concerns, or if we can be of assistance in drafting the suggested amendment, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Pamela C. Marsh, President

Cc: The Honorable Bill Galvano, President, The Florida Senate
Mr. Jim Baltzelle, Associated Press, Chair, First Amendment Foundation
Mr. Samuel Morley, General Counsel, Florida Press Association
Ms. Lisa Nellessen Savage, Chair, Florida Society of News Editors