

Duckworth, Blackburn Introduce Bipartisan Legislation To Improve Emergency Communication Technology That Could Help Saves Lives

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, today introduced legislation to improve emergency communication technology that could help save lives. The ITS Codification Act would codify the Institute for Telecommunication Sciences (ITS), which currently serves as the research and engineering laboratory at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and require ITS to develop emergency communication and

tracking technologies to help locate trapped individuals in confined spaces where conventional radio communication is limited.

“It’s critical that our first responders have access to reliable technology that can help them successfully locate and rescue individuals that find themselves trapped in confined spaces, often without any access to outside communication,” said Duckworth. “I’m proud to introduce this bipartisan legislation with Senator Blackburn to help codify the ITS at NTIA and develop emergency communication and tracking technologies that could save lives.”

“First responders need access to the best and most reliable equipment available, so that they can do their jobs to save lives,” said Blackburn. “Sometimes in emergency situations, individuals have no cell service or ability to be located by rescuers. By codifying the Institute for Telecommunication Sciences, we can improve technologies for these scenarios and ensure efficient and effective use of our scarce spectrum resources – helping to keep America on the front lines of innovation.”

This is an identical companion bill to Representative Earl “Buddy” Carter’s bipartisan H. R. 1343, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives via voice vote on April 25, 2023. This bipartisan legislation was since referred to the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

A copy of the bill text is available on [the Senator’s website](#).