

## From The House

### A Tech Improvement for 9-1-1

By Rep. Matt Ritter

The state's 9-1-1 system received a much-needed tech overhaul...and the result is a new system where (in an emergency) you can text emergency services from your mobile device. Text-to-911 is part of the state's new Next Generation 9-1-1 Emergency Telecommunications System.

One of the government's most important duties is to provide for the safety of residents, and this new system increases access to emergency responders to help protect everyone in need. Next Generation 9-1-1 allows you to send a text message to 9-1-1 from a handheld device in emergency situations. The idea is, there may be times where you wouldn't be safe speaking over the phone; or it's just not possible to dial.

Text-to-911 is also a tool for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability. It is intended to be used when people are in certain situations that would be unsafe or impractical to place an audible voice call, such as during a home invasion, an act of domestic violence, or active mass shooting, and also during medical emergencies that render a person incapable of speech.

Even with the new system, *voice* calls to 9-1-1 remain the best and fastest way to contact emergency services whenever it is feasible to do so. Text-to-911 is only intended to be used when absolutely necessary, which is why the new system's slogan is: *Call if you can, text if you can't*.

For more information on the Text-to-911 system and to see a demonstration of the capability, visit [www.Text911CT.org](http://www.Text911CT.org).