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U.S. Senate Overwhelmingly Supports Satellite Technology for Interoperable Emergency Communications

Washington, DC -- Last night the Senate voted overwhelmingly (71-25) to support the Inouye/Stevens Interoperable Emergency Communications Act portion of the 9/11 Report Implementation Bill (S.4) which is currently under consideration on the Senate Floor.

Satellite Industry Association (SIA) Executive Director David Cavossa lauded the Senate's decisive vote, stating **"in supporting the Inouye/Stevens language the Senate has clearly recognized the critical role satellite communications and other wireless technologies play in disaster relief and recovery"**.

Cavossa further said **"we appreciate the strong support of Senators Inouye and Stevens in defending against efforts to remove this provision from the bill during floor debate"**. As Hurricane Katrina and other recent disasters have shown, satellite communications are uniquely able to provide resilient, redundant, and ubiquitous communications when all other terrestrial-based communications fail.

The Inouye/Stevens language in S. 4 creates a Strategic Technology Reserve designed to pre-position interoperable communications equipment for immediate action in an emergency or major disaster. **"This language will assist public safety agencies in planning, designing, pre-positioning and deploying interoperable communications equipment, including satellite services and equipment, that will go a long way toward improving interoperability and ensuring basic operability for first responders in response to natural and man-made disasters"**, stated Cavossa.

The Interoperable Emergency Communications language was co-sponsored by Senators Daniel Inouye (D-HI), Ted Stevens (R-AK), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), John Kerry (D-MA), and Gordon Smith (R-OR) and was reported out of the Senate Commerce Committee last month as S. 385. This language was attached to S. 4 earlier in the week by Senator Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV).

The Satellite Industry Association is a U.S. consensus-based trade association which serves as the unified voice of the U.S. satellite industry on policy, regulatory, and legislative issues affecting the satellite business. SIA provides worldwide representation of the leading global satellite operators, service providers, manufacturers, launch services providers, integrators, ground equipment suppliers, and DBS providers.

SIA Executive Members include: Arrowhead Global Solutions; Artel Inc.; The Boeing Company; The DIRECTV Group; Globalstar, Inc; Hughes Network Systems LLC; ICO Global Communications; Integral Systems, Inc.; Intelsat, Ltd.; Iridium Satellite LLC; Lockheed Martin Corp.; Loral Space & Communications Inc.; Mobile Satellite Ventures LP; Northrop Grumman Corporation; SES Americom, Inc.; and TerreStar Networks Inc.; and Associate Members include: ATK Inc.; EchoStar Satellite LLC, EMC Inc.; Eutelsat Inc.; Inmarsat Inc.; IOT Systems; Marshall Communications Corp.; SES NEW SKIES; Spacecom Corp.; Spacenet Inc.; Stratos Global Corp; and SWE-DISH Satellite Systems Inc. Additional information can be found at www.sia.org.

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