

By Beth McIntire

Raleigh-area Congressman David Price (NC-04), Ranking Member of the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, commended AT&T for becoming the first company in the nation to earn U.S. Department of Homeland Security certification for disaster preparedness.

AT&T has earned certification under the DHS Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Program or PS-Prep, which is administered by the DHS's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The program encourages private sector firms and non-profit organizations to beef up their abilities to plan, respond to, and recover from natural disasters and other threats.

"AT&T has a long-standing commitment to being prepared to deliver the products and services our customers depend upon every day and particularly when disaster strikes," said Cynthia Marshall, President of AT&T North Carolina. "We are proud to be the first company in the nation to attain Homeland Security certification, but this doesn't happen by accident. We continually invest in our networks – including more than \$1.8 billion over the past four years here in North Carolina alone – and exercise our continuity program to ensure our business and network operations remain state-of-the-art."

"Reliable communication systems are an essential part of protecting our citizens and boosting the effectiveness of first responders in the wake of disasters," said Congressman Price. "We are proud that a company with a significant presence in the Research Triangle is the first to achieve certification under PS-Prep. I applaud AT&T's proactive approach to continuity planning and hope that other businesses, large and small, will follow their example."

PS-Prep is the result of a 2007 Congressional directive to implement a private sector preparedness accreditation and certification program. As a voluntary program, PS-Prep mainly serves as a resource for companies interested in implementing business continuity plans using nationally recognized best practices.

AT&T employs approximately 7,000 people across North Carolina and has more than 103

million wireless customers nationwide.