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First Lady Mary Pat Christie Promotes Awareness of “Text First. Talk Second”™ Initiative

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Tags: [First Lady](#)

Trenton, NJ – First Lady Mary Pat Christie is joining other First Spouses from across the country in an initiative that encourages their respective residents to “Text First. Talk Second”™ when checking in with family and friends after a weather emergency or disaster. The awareness campaign is being spearheaded by South Carolina First Gentleman Mike Haley, in cooperation with the Safe America Foundation.

“In the days after Superstorm Sandy, it was important for our residents to reach out to family and friends to let them know they were safe,” said First Lady Mary Pat Christie. “When these types of emergencies occur, texting is a good alternative to voice communications, and is a critical element of family

preparedness planning. So, I am encouraging New Jersey families to develop and have a text message system in place.”

During and after weather-related or other emergencies, SMS text messages will connect before a call because mobile call volume often overwhelms provider capacity during these incidents. Preparedness experts universally agree that during an emergency and its immediate aftermath, communicating by SMS text messaging is the best alternative. This is because non-essential calls often shutdown wireless phone service and prevent 911 calls from getting through and emergency personnel from being able to communicate with each other. In fact, just a single one-minute phone call takes up the same bandwidth as 800 short SMS text messages. To address this issue, New Jersey recently enacted a [text to 911 system](#) in all 21 counties.

First Lady Mary Pat Christie's effort to raise awareness on this issue is part of the Safe America Foundation's [First Spouses Campaign](#). Championed initially in 2010 by former First Lady of West Virginia Gayle Manchin, and currently chaired by First Gentleman of South Carolina, Mike Haley, the Campaign has since generated support from First Spouses in various states/territories. These states include: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virgin Islands, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

September is National Preparedness Month, a time to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies at home, work, and school. For additional information about preparedness tips for all types of emergencies, visit www.ready.nj.gov.

Editor's Note: [The “Text First. Talk Second”™ campaign logo.](#) [jpg 390kB]

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