To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the National Suicide Improvement Act. Crisis and suicide prevention services serve as a final option for seeking help when individuals are at their most hopeless and desperate. Anything that simplifies the process of reaching out for help will save lives. The process of shortening the number required to get help will save lives.

Further, geolocation in routing will help callers receive services and referrals where they need them most. Currently the system routes calls based on the caller’s area code. As cell phone usage has replaced landlines that system of routing has stopped serving the needs of callers and crisis counselors. Callers tend to retain their phone numbers over years and even decades. It is common for the area code of a caller to not match their current location/address. This leads to crisis line centers 1000s of miles away from the caller trying to help manage crisis in suboptimal conditions.

Using geolocation technologies could greatly improve the responsiveness and efficiency of Lifeline operations. Crisis centers could leverage local support and emergency more effectively and consistently. One of the greatest frustrations of working on the Lifeline is speaking with a caller who has taken pills and needs emergency assistance and you are desperately trying to find the number for emergency services in their area. This situation can be largely be avoided with geolocation routing.

Please consider approving and support this important Act.

Sincerely,

Sara Hood

Berkeley, CA