



June 7, 2019

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Federal ID #:
51-0201771

Donations to 2-1-1 Big Bend
are tax deductible according
to IRS guidelines.

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 18-336 and CC Docket No. 92-105 regarding the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018

Dear Madam Secretary:

2-1-1 Big Bend, Inc. (211BB) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization located in Tallahassee, Florida. We have provided crisis intervention and information hotline services since 1970 and implemented the 211 three-digit number for this service in 2002. 211BB is a member of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network and answers that suicide prevention Lifeline for callers in the North Florida region. We are accredited by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) and the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). We have nationally certified staff and hotline counselors trained in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training).

The 211BB president served on the AIRS board from 1996-2004 and as its board president in 2001-2003. In 2000, as a member of the AIRS board and the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services (FLAIRS) board, he advocated for the adoption of the 211 Dialing Code to be used for community health and human services. We now endorse the recommendation of the North American Numbering Council (NANC) to expand the 211 Dialing Code to formally include mental health and suicide prevention.

211BB has been operating as a blended crisis and information and referral hotline since its inception and is an example of how the 211 number can be effective for both purposes in an integrated fashion. We also understand that there will need to be enhanced technology implemented throughout the nation in order for 211 calls to be effectively routed to 211 centers on a national basis if the NANC recommendations are implemented. We believe that it will be more effective and efficient to build out the existing 211 infrastructure for national suicide prevention purposes than to use a different N11 number for that purpose.

211BB would like to support the positions of United Way Worldwide, AIRS, and the National 211 Leadership Group in their respective letters to the Commission advocating for the expansion of the 211 Dialing Code. We believe that there is tremendous collaboration between members in these groups and with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This is a good roadmap for success.

Thank you for consideration of our comments on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Randall S. Nicklaus
President
2-1-1 Big Bend

Upcoming Events

ASIST Workshop
Sat & Sun July 20 & 21, 2019

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Let's Stay in Touch!

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