

The Honorable Nancy H. Rubin
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Los Angeles, CA 90077
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Phone: (424) 325-3284

June 6th, 2019

Re: "National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act" 18-336

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a member of the Board of Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services, home to the first Suicide Prevention Center in the U.S. I am writing in support of the designation of a unique 3-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network. All members of the network are accredited and the phone counselors must adhere to research-driven standards and protocols. In addition, the Lifeline has advanced technology that links all providers together, ensuring coverage when any lines are down or at capacity.

In my role, I have become familiar with the intensive research-informed training that the counselors on our suicide crisis line receive, which totals over 90 hours. It takes a special person to even consider such work. Even fewer make it through the screening and training process.

Suicide needs a dedicated 3-digit number. Merging this lifesaving service with 211 is not a viable option. The skills it takes to help people on the brink of suicide and those who love them are completely different from the skills required to provide information and referrals to shelter, food, education, etc.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nancy Rubin", followed by a long horizontal flourish line.

Nancy Rubin