December 10, 2018

DeAnne K L Bender, LMFT

Program Director

Via Avanta

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

11643 Glenoaks Blvd

Pacoima, CA 91331

Federal Communications Commission

445 12th Street, SW

Washington, DC 20554

Re: Docket 18-336

Implementation of the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to urge you to designate and fund a 3-digit dialing code (N11) for a national Suicide Prevention Crisis Hotline System.

As the Program Director of a residential treatment facility for women burdened with substance use and mental health issues, every day, I interact with women who have attempted suicide, one or more times, in the past. It is truly heart-wrenching to hear the stories of hopelessness, isolation, and fear of the future that led these women to feel they had no other alternative but to take their own lives. Gratefully, their attempts were not successful and they are now in treatment trying to rebuild their lives.

Gravely, there are many suffering who are not as fortunate as the ladies I work with, in that suicide prevention and/or intervention came too late or not at all. These individuals are no longer with us.

If there is anything we can do as a society to help facilitate access to suicide prevention services, particularly something as simple and direct as designating an easily-memorized and recognized phone number to the national Suicide Prevention Crisis Hotline System, shouldn’t we do it?

Thank you very much for your interest and thoughtful approach to this important issue that affects hundreds of millions of lives in our country every year.

Respectfully yours,

DeAnne K L Bender, LMFT

Program Director

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