



December 10, 2018

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Docket 18-336 & 92-105
Implementation of the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018

Dear Commissioners:

The Oregon state chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness expresses its support for the designation of a three-digit crisis intervention service. NAMI Oregon is a grassroots membership organization that provides free education, support, and advocacy services to more than 8,000 Oregonians annually. We are people with lived experience — whether we live with a mental illness or are a family member with a loved one who lives with mental illness — who use our experience and specialized training to help others navigate a convoluted healthcare system that often sends us down dead-ends in our search for effective assistance.

We know too well the toll that crises exacts. And we know the difficulty of trying to find and/or memorize myriad crisis line phone numbers. A three-digit Behavioral Health and Suicide Crisis Lifeline can make a huge difference for individuals and families, giving them easier access to hotline staff and crisis services at a moment when they are scared, confused, and often unable to respond optimally to the challenges that a crisis presents.

We believe such a three-digit service should stand alone and not be tied to an existing three-digit designation. In a crisis, removing barriers, whether large or small, is critical to a successful response and successful outcome. Already, we avail ourselves of 911 because of its simplicity. But it's often the wrong service to call, putting law enforcement between our need for help and speedy access to the crisis intervention services that we need. A stand-alone three-digit Behavioral Health and Suicide Crisis Lifeline would grant us the quick access that we need. It would also allow the service to develop its own national identity so it can be as ubiquitous as 911 or 211.org.

For these and many other reasons, we encourage the FCC to designate a three-digit Behavioral Health and Suicide Crisis Lifeline. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Bouneff".

Chris Bouneff
Executive Director