

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF UNITED WAYS

330 Marshall Street, Suite 211
Lansing, MI 48912



December 7, 2018

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street 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,

The Michigan Association of United Ways (MAUW) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the current effort undertaken by the Federal Communications Commission to study the feasibility of designating a three-digit number to the National Suicide Hotline and to assess the effectiveness of the current National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. MAUW fights for the health, education and financial stability by investing in 211 and the integration of health and human services.

We acknowledge efforts are needed to create a safe place for all people to call – especially underserved or marginalized populations such as seniors, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, people that identify as LGBTQ+, Veterans, American Natives, non-English speakers, and individuals facing complex problems such as substance/opioid use, human trafficking, and domestic violence. Since 1947, MAUW has a history of reaching out to the underserved and today we partner with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to drive systemic changes to solve our community's toughest problems like mental health and crisis.

We encourage the FCC to consider our 211 work here in Michigan as a vital partner in increasing access to suicide prevention and intervention services. Since the FCC designation of 211 in 2000, we have invested millions to the success of a strong 211 system and answer over 500M requests for help each year. Another three-digit code may erode the ease and effectiveness of a single point of access for community help.

We recommend that resources should be invested to improve a unified single point of access with a blended partnership of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and United Way's 211 services. We believe in the power of partnership to address gaps, not duplicate services, and will be a valuable partner in the fight against suicide.

You can learn more about our work at www.uwmich.org and can reach my office for additional questions or discussion at 571 371-4360. Thank you for your time in addressing this important issue and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Larson", is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Larson
President and CEO

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