



Division of Behavioral Health Services

Office of the Chief Medical Officer

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JANICE K. BREWER, GOVERNOR
WILL HUMBLE, DIRECTOR

August 17, 2011

Marlene H. Dortch
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Notice of Ex Parte Communication
WC Docket No. 07-271

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Behavioral Health Services (ADHS/DBHS) is writing this letter in support of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) maintenance of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (National Lifeline). The National Lifeline is inclusive of three suicide prevention hotline numbers (1-800-SUICIDE, 1-888-SUICIDE, and 1-877-SUICIDA).

The National Lifeline saves lives by providing critical support for our most vulnerable citizens. Its services include follow-up calls to individuals at high-risk discharged from hospitals and emergency rooms. Each life saved reduces medical care cost and lost productivity.

Since its launch in January 2005, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline has routed over 40,000 calls from individuals in Arizona who are in emotional distress or suicidal crisis to a local support provider. Since 2007, an additional 9,000 Arizona veterans were able to seamlessly access care via 1-800-273-TALK due to SAMHSA's National Lifeline partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). There are three lines that belong to the Kristin Brooks Hope Center that have been routed through the Lifeline system since March 2007, and currently these calls account for approximately 30% of Lifeline's total call volume. For Arizona, this equated to almost 4,000 calls in 2010.

SAMHSA is the ideal organization to manage all toll-free suicide prevention hotlines as it is able to provide consistent and reliable staffing, funding, and expertise. The National Lifeline also has an extensive back-up system, which includes regional back-up centers and a national back-up center, thereby ensuring that all calls are answered, even if the crisis centers in our state are beyond capacity.

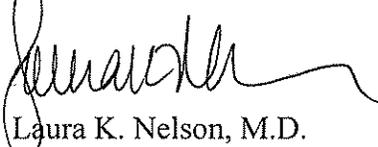
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Lifeline provides a reliable public health safety net for America's most vulnerable citizens including people with mental illness and/or substance use disorders. With a dependable, nationwide crisis calling system, Arizonans will receive the continuity of care that is vitally important during crisis through a national crisis hotline system available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For this reason, ADHS/DBHS strongly supports the continuation of this invaluable SAMHSA service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura K. Nelson', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Laura K. Nelson, M.D.

Arizona Department of Health Services, Chief Medical Officer
Division of Behavioral Health Services, Deputy Director