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Legislative Impact Statement

To: Chairperson Marvin L. Abney
From: Elisabeth Hubbard, Executive Secretary

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities' Legislation Committee has developed a Legislative Impact Statement on the bill listed below. The Commission would be pleased to present testimony to the committee. Please contact me (462-0112) if testimony is desired or for additional information.

24 HOUSE 7035 AN ACT RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND HOSPITALS – COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Introduced by Representative Shallcross-Smith

This bill Appropriates \$1,875,000 for the creation of a 9-8-8 suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline within the department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities, and hospitals (BHDDH).

The Legislation Committee finds this bill beneficial.

"Mental health crises and suicides can be devastating for individuals, families, and communities. When someone experiences a mental health crisis and doesn't receive the care they need, they can end up in emergency rooms, on the streets, involved in the criminal justice system, or in the worst case, they could lose their life. A 24/7 crisis hotline can be the first line of defense in preventing these tragedies and an essential part of any continuum of care for mental health crises.

Since 2004, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Lifeline) has been accessible nationwide by dialing 800-273-TALK (8255). However, a 10-digit number is not always easy to remember during a crisis, and every year the demand for the Lifeline's services increases. To support those in crisis, access to the Lifeline should be simplified and resources allocated to bring this life-saving resource to a much larger scale.

To date, both Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have taken steps to support this effort. The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act (Public Law # 116-172) designates 9-8-8 as the national number for suicide prevention and mental health crises and permits states to impose fees to support local operations of 9-

8-8. The FCC has approved an implementation plan that would make 9-8-8 operational nationwide by July 2022.

Simplifying access and increasing resources is just one part of supporting people in crisis who call the Lifeline. To ensure that people can be connected to the care they need when they dial 9-8-8, we need to create a readily accessible crisis response system."

Source: <https://www.nami.org/Advocacy/Policy-Priorities/Responding-to-Crises/National-Hotline-for-Mental-Health-Crises-and-Suicide-Prevention>

CC: Representative Shallcross Smith
Rico Vota, Governor's Office of Legislative Affairs