

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 55

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman JOANN DOWNEY

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblyman ERIC HOUGHTALING

District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Urges FCC to take all necessary action to designate 9-8-8 to be used for nationwide suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging the Federal Communications
2 Commission to take all necessary action to designate 9-8-8 to be
3 used for a nationwide suicide prevention and mental health crisis
4 hotline.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, Suicide prevention assistance is available 24 hours per day,
7 seven days per week through the National Suicide Prevention
8 Lifeline (NSPL), which has a 10-digit number: 1-800-273-8255
9 (TALK); and
10 **WHEREAS**, The NSPL is a national network of 163 crisis centers and
11 is funded by the federal Department of Health and Human Services'
12 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
13 (SAMHSA); and
14 **WHEREAS**, Calls to the NSPL are routed from anywhere in the United
15 States to the closest certified crisis center and, according to the
16 Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in 2018, trained
17 NSPL counselors answered over 2.2 million calls and over 100,000
18 online chats; and
19 **WHEREAS**, The National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018, in
20 part, required the FCC, in consultation with the SAMHSA, the
21 Department of Veterans Affairs, and the North American
22 Numbering Council, to study and report to the United States
23 Congress on the feasibility of using a simple, easy-to-remember,
24 three-digit number for a national suicide prevention and mental
25 health crisis hotline system; and
26 **WHEREAS**, On August 15, 2019, the FCC's Wireline Competition
27 Bureau and Office of Economics and Analytics announced that they
28 sent its report to Congress, which recommends that the FCC
29 consider designating 9-8-8 as the three-digit number to be used for
30 a nationwide suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline;
31 and
32 **WHEREAS**, The FCC report found that a three-digit number "would
33 likely make it easier for Americans in crisis to access potentially
34 life-saving resources"; and
35 **WHEREAS**, In response to the report's findings and recommendations,
36 FCC Chairman Ajit Pai stated that he intends to move forward on
37 the report's recommendation and launch a rulemaking proceeding
38 in which the FCC would consider designating a three-digit number,
39 specifically 9-8-8, for a national suicide prevention and mental
40 health crisis hotline; and
41 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper for this House to
42 respectfully urge the FCC to take all necessary action to designate
43 a three-digit number, namely 9-8-8, to be used for a nationwide
44 suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline; now, therefore,
45
46 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
47 *Jersey:*

AR55 QUIJANO, DOWNEY

1. This House respectfully urges the Federal Communications Commission to take all necessary action to designate 9-8-8 to be used for a nationwide suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to each Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission, the presiding officers of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, and to each member of Congress elected from this State.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take all necessary action to designate 9-8-8 to be used for a nationwide suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. Currently, suicide prevention assistance is available through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which uses a 10-digit number: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). In an August 15, 2019 report to the United States Congress, the FCC found that the feasibility of using a simple, easy-to-remember, three-digit number, namely 9-8-8, for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system would likely make it easier for Americans in crisis to access potentially life-saving resources.