

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3111

To facilitate nationwide availability of 2–1–1 telephone service for information and referral on human services, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2003

Mr. BURR (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. UPTON, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. DEUTSCH, Mr. CASE, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LINDER, Mr. NORWOOD, and Mr. EHLERS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To facilitate nationwide availability of 2–1–1 telephone service for information and referral on human services, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Calling for 2–1–1 Act
5 of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) The Federal Communications Commission
2 has assigned 2-1-1 as the national telephone num-
3 ber for telephone service for information and referral
4 on human services, declaring that 2-1-1 best satis-
5 fies the public interest in allotting the limited re-
6 source of this abbreviated number. In 2005, the
7 Commission will assess the widespread utilization of
8 the 2-1-1 telephone number and evaluate whether
9 to continue the assignment of that telephone number
10 for that service.

11 (2) The number “2-1-1” is an easy-to-remem-
12 ber telephone number that facilitates critical connec-
13 tions between individuals and families seeking serv-
14 ices, volunteer opportunities, or both and appro-
15 priate human service agencies, including community-
16 based and faith-based organizations and government
17 agencies.

18 (3) There are more than 820,000 nonprofit or-
19 ganizations in the United States. Individuals and
20 families often find it difficult to navigate through a
21 complex and ever growing maze of human service
22 agencies and programs, spending inordinate
23 amounts of time trying to identify an agency or pro-
24 gram that provides a service that may be imme-
25 diately or urgently required and often abandoning

1 the search from frustration or a lack of quality in-
2 formation.

3 (4) At the Federal, State, and local levels, gov-
4 ernment funding supports well-intentioned programs
5 that are not fully utilized because of a lack of access
6 to and information on such programs by the public.
7 Program administrators have indicated that there is
8 a need for a simple way to connect those eligible for
9 programs with available program resources. 2-1-1
10 telephone service will reduce the number of inappro-
11 priate calls to government offices by directing con-
12 sumers to the appropriate human services agency,
13 resulting in a more effective use of government serv-
14 ices.

15 (5) Many families need information on govern-
16 ment and not-for-profit services that address domes-
17 tic violence, support adequate and stable housing, al-
18 leviate hunger, and provide for high-quality day
19 care, afterschool activities, summer activities, job
20 training and assistance, elder care, and disaster re-
21 covery.

22 (6) Individuals often need support, services, or
23 both when suffering emotional distress, having suici-
24 dal thoughts or behavior, contemplating violence, or
25 using drugs or alcohol.

1 (7) Americans desire to volunteer and become
2 involved in their communities. This desire, together
3 with a desire to donate to organizations which pro-
4 vide human services, are among the reasons to con-
5 tact a center which provides information and referral
6 on volunteer opportunities and human services.

7 (8) Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist
8 attacks, an estimated 400 telephone hotlines were
9 established in New York, New York, for various
10 funds and services, creating a confusing network for
11 victims and volunteers to navigate. A Comptroller
12 General report on charitable aid following the ter-
13 rorist attacks found that “families of victims gen-
14 erally believed they had to navigate a maze of service
15 providers in the early months” and that “good infor-
16 mation about and easy access to available assistance
17 could help survivors in the recovery process”.

18 (9) The 107th Congress recognized the impor-
19 tance of 2-1-1 telephone service in community pre-
20 paredness and response by including use of that tele-
21 phone number for public information as an allowable
22 use of funds under grants for preparedness and re-
23 sponse to bioterrorism and other public health emer-
24 gencies under section 319C-1 of the Public Health
25 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d-3a), as added by sec-

1 tion 131 of the Public Health Security and Bioter-
2 rorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002
3 (Public Law 107–188).

4 (10) While 20 percent of the population has ac-
5 cess to 2–1–1 telephone service in 21 States, inad-
6 equate funding prevents access to that telephone
7 service throughout each of the States. 2–1–1 tele-
8 phone service is currently available statewide only in
9 Connecticut and Hawaii.

10 (11) Rapid deployment nationwide of 2–1–1
11 telephone service as a means of access to informa-
12 tion about and referral on human services requires
13 collaboration among State governments, comprehen-
14 sive and specialized information and referral centers,
15 human service organizations and service providers,
16 emergency management and homeland security offi-
17 cials, telephone companies, and other relevant enti-
18 ties.

19 (12) 2–1–1 telephone service facilitates the
20 availability of a single repository where comprehen-
21 sive data on all community services is collected,
22 maintained, and updated regularly, reducing costs
23 and duplication of efforts. The reliable data provided
24 through 2–1–1 telephone service helps to better as-

1 sess the needs of our communities and to imme-
2 diately mobilize resources toward those needs.

3 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO FACILITATE NATIONWIDE AVAIL-**
4 **ABILITY OF 2-1-1 SERVICE FOR INFORMA-**
5 **TION AND REFERRAL ON HUMAN SERVICES.**

6 (a) GRANTS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Com-
7 merce shall award a grant to each State to carry out a
8 program for the purpose of making available throughout
9 such State 2-1-1 telephone service for information and
10 referral on human services.

11 (b) GRANT TO BE AVAILABLE FOR EACH STATE.—
12 In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall
13 develop a formula for allocating grant amounts among the
14 States so that a grant may be awarded to each State seek-
15 ing a grant.

16 (c) REQUIREMENT ON SHARE OF ACTIVITIES.—

17 (1) REQUIREMENT.—A State may not be
18 awarded a grant under this section unless the State
19 ensures that at least 50 percent of the resources of
20 the program funded by the grant will be derived
21 from other sources.

22 (2) IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.—The require-
23 ment in paragraph (1) may be satisfied by in-kind
24 contributions of goods or services.

25 (d) LEAD ENTITY.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—A State seeking a grant
2 under this section shall carry out this section
3 through a lead entity meeting the requirements of
4 this subsection.

5 (2) 2–1–1 COLLABORATIVE.—An entity shall be
6 treated as the 2–1–1 Collaborative for a State under
7 this subsection if the entity—

8 (A) exists for such purpose under State
9 law;

10 (B) exists for such purpose by order of the
11 State public utility commission; or

12 (C) is a collaborative entity established by
13 the State for such purpose from among rep-
14 resentatives of—

15 (i) an informal existing 2–1–1 state-
16 wide collaborative, if any, in the State;

17 (ii) community-based organizations;

18 (iii) faith-based organizations;

19 (iv) not-for-profit organizations;

20 (v) comprehensive and specialized in-
21 formation and referral providers, including
22 current 2–1–1 call centers;

23 (vi) foundations; and

24 (vii) businesses.

1 (3) REQUIREMENTS FOR PREEXISTING LEAD
2 ENTITIES.—An entity described by subparagraph
3 (A) or (B) of paragraph (2) may be treated as a
4 lead entity under this subsection only if the such en-
5 tity collaborates, to the extent practicable, with the
6 organizations and entities listed in subparagraph (C)
7 of that paragraph.

8 (e) APPLICATION.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The lead entity on behalf of
10 each State seeking a grant under this section shall
11 submit to the Secretary an application therefor in
12 such form as the Secretary shall require.

13 (2) INFORMATION.—An application on behalf of
14 a State under this subsection shall contain informa-
15 tion as follows:

16 (A) Information on the program to be car-
17 ried out by the lead entity of the State in order
18 to plan to make available throughout the State
19 2-1-1 telephone service for information and re-
20 ferral on human services, including information
21 on the manner in which the lead entity will de-
22 velop, sustain, and evaluate the program.

23 (B) Information on the sources of re-
24 sources for the program for purposes of meet-
25 ing the requirement in subsection (e).

1 (C) Any additional information that the
2 Secretary may require for purposes of this sec-
3 tion.

4 (f) SUBGRANTS.—

5 (1) AUTHORITY.—In carrying out a program to
6 make 2–1–1 telephone service available throughout a
7 State at no charge to the caller, the lead entity of
8 the State may make subgrants to such persons or
9 entities as the lead entity considers appropriate for
10 purposes of the program, including subgrants to pro-
11 vide funds—

12 (A) for the provision of 2–1–1 telephone
13 service;

14 (B) for the operation and maintenance of
15 2–1–1 call centers; and

16 (C) for such other purposes as the 2–1–1
17 Collaborative considers appropriate for purposes
18 of the program, including planning, public
19 awareness, training, accreditation, and evalua-
20 tion.

21 (2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding a subgrant
22 under this subsection, a lead entity shall consider—

23 (A) the ability of the person or entity seek-
24 ing the subgrant to carry out activities or pro-
25 vide services consistent with the program;

1 (B) the extent to which the award of the
2 subgrant will facilitate equitable geographic dis-
3 tribution of subgrants under this section to en-
4 sure that rural communities have access to 2-
5 1-1 telephone service; and

6 (C) the extent to which the recipient of the
7 subgrant will establish and maintain cooperative
8 relationships with specialized information and
9 referral centers, crisis centers, 9-1-1 call cen-
10 ters, and 3-1-1 call centers, if applicable.

11 (g) USE OF GRANT AND SUBGRANT AMOUNTS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts awarded as grants
13 or subgrants under this section shall be used solely
14 to make available 2-1-1 telephone service for com-
15 munity information and referral on human services,
16 including telephone connections between families and
17 individuals seeking such services and the providers
18 of such services.

19 (2) PARTICULAR MATTERS.—In making 2-1-1
20 telephone service available, the recipient of a grant
21 or subgrant shall, to the maximum extent prac-
22 ticable—

23 (A) abide by the Key Standards for 2-1-
24 1 Centers as specified in the Standards for Pro-
25 fessional Information and Referral Require-

1 ments for Alliance of Information Referral Sys-
2 tems (AIRS) Accreditation and Operating 2-1-
3 1 Systems; and

4 (B) collaborate with human service organi-
5 zations, whether public or private, to provide an
6 exhaustive database of services with which to
7 provide information or referral to individuals
8 utilizing 2-1-1 telephone service.

9 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts of a subgrant
10 under subsection (e) may be used by grantees for
11 Statewide and regional planning, start-up costs (in-
12 cluding costs of software and hardware upgrades
13 and telecommunications costs), training, accredita-
14 tion, public awareness, evaluation of activities, and
15 the provision of 2-1-1 telephone service.

16 (h) REQUIREMENTS ON USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—
17 Of the amount awarded as a grant under this section—

18 (1) not less than 2 percent shall be used for
19 evaluation of persons or entities for eligibility for
20 subgrants under subsection (e);

21 (2) not less than 2 percent shall be used for
22 technical assistance for persons or entities awarded
23 subgrants under that subsection; and

1 (3) not more than 6 percent shall be used for
2 the management and administration of subgrants
3 awarded under that subsection.

4 (i) REPORTS.—The lead entity of each State awarded
5 a grant under this section for a fiscal year shall submit
6 to the Secretary, not later than 60 days after the end of
7 such fiscal year, a report on the program funded by the
8 grant. Each report shall—

9 (1) describe the program funding by the grant;
10 and

11 (2) assess the effectiveness of the program in
12 making available throughout such State 2–1–1 tele-
13 phone service for information and referral on human
14 services in accordance with the provisions of this
15 section.

16 (j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) HUMAN SERVICES.—The term “human
18 services” means services as follows:

19 (A) Services that assist individuals in be-
20 coming more self-sufficient, in preventing de-
21 pendency, and in strengthening family relation-
22 ships.

23 (B) Services that support personal and so-
24 cial development.

1 (C) Services that help ensure the health
2 and well-being of individuals, families, and com-
3 munities.

4 (2) INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CENTER.—
5 The term “information and referral center” means
6 a center that—

7 (A) maintains a database of providers of
8 human services in a State or locality;

9 (B) assists individuals, families, and com-
10 munities in identifying, understanding, and ac-
11 cessing the providers of human services and the
12 human services offered by the providers of such
13 services; and

14 (C) tracks types of calls referred and re-
15 ceived to document the demands for services.

16 (3) STATE.—The term “State” means the sev-
17 eral States, the District of Columbia, the Common-
18 wealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam,
19 American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the
20 Northern Mariana Islands.

21 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
23 priated to carry out this Act amounts as follows:

24 (1) For fiscal year 2004, \$200,000,000.

1 (2) For each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009,
2 such sums as may be necessary.

3 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant
4 to the authorization of appropriations in subsection (a)
5 shall remain available until expended.

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