

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 211

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

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 31, 2005

Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. BURR, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HAGEL, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BAYH, Mr. INOUYE, and Mr. BENNETT) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To facilitate nationwide availability of 2–1–1 telephone service for information and referral on human services, volunteer 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 2005”.

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 approximately 1,500,000 non-  
19          profit organizations in the United States. Individuals  
20          and families often find it difficult to navigate  
21          through a complex and ever-growing maze of human  
22          service 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) A national cost benefit analysis conducted  
16 by the University of Texas estimates a net value to  
17 society of a national 2-1-1 system approaching  
18 \$130,000,000 in the first year alone and a conserv-  
19 ative estimate of nearly \$1,100,000,000 over 10  
20 years.

21 (6) Many families need information on govern-  
22 ment and not-for-profit services that provide high  
23 quality child care and early childhood education,  
24 such as the Federal Head Start program, after  
25 school and summer activities for children, job train-

1 ing and assistance, housing and hunger assistance,  
2 elder care, help for victims of domestic violence, dis-  
3 aster recovery, and volunteer opportunities.

4 (7) Individuals often need support, services, or  
5 both when suffering emotional distress, having suici-  
6 dal thoughts or behavior, contemplating violence, or  
7 using drugs or alcohol.

8 (8) Americans desire to volunteer and become  
9 involved in their communities. This desire, together  
10 with a desire to donate to organizations which pro-  
11 vide human services, are among the reasons to con-  
12 tact a center which provides information and referral  
13 on volunteer opportunities and human services. A  
14 simple call to 2-1-1 will help a citizen find the vol-  
15 unteer opportunity they seek.

16 (9) Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist  
17 attacks, an estimated 400 telephone hotlines were  
18 established in New York, New York, for various  
19 funds and services, creating a confusing network for  
20 victims and volunteers to navigate. A Comptroller  
21 General report on charitable aid following the ter-  
22 rorist attacks found that “families of victims gen-  
23 erally believed they had to navigate a maze of service  
24 providers in the early months” and that “good infor-

1       mation about and easy access to available assistance  
2       could help survivors in the recovery process”.

3           (10) The 107th Congress recognized the impor-  
4       tance of 2–1–1 telephone service in community pre-  
5       paredness and response by including use of that tele-  
6       phone number for public information as an allowable  
7       use of funds under grants for preparedness and re-  
8       sponse to bioterrorism and other public health emer-  
9       gencies under section 319C–1 of the Public Health  
10      Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d–3a), as added by sec-  
11      tion 131 of the Public Health Security and Bioter-  
12      rorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002  
13      (Public Law 107–188).

14          (11) While 37 percent of the population has ac-  
15      cess to 2–1–1 telephone service in 29 States, inad-  
16      equate funding prevents access to that telephone  
17      service throughout each of the States. 2–1–1 tele-  
18      phone service is currently available statewide only in  
19      9 States.

20          (12) Rapid deployment nationwide of 2–1–1  
21      telephone service as a means of access to informa-  
22      tion about and referral on human services requires  
23      collaboration among State governments, comprehen-  
24      sive and specialized information and referral centers,  
25      including Child Care Resource and Referral Agen-

1       cies, human service organizations and service pro-  
 2       viders, emergency management and homeland secu-  
 3       rity officials, telephone companies, and other rel-  
 4       evant entities.

5           (13) 2-1-1 telephone service facilitates the  
 6       availability of a single repository where comprehen-  
 7       sive data on all community services is collected,  
 8       maintained, and updated regularly, reducing costs  
 9       and duplication of efforts. The reliable data provided  
 10      through 2-1-1 telephone service helps to better as-  
 11      sess the needs of our communities and to imme-  
 12      diately mobilize resources toward those needs.

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

16       (a) GRANTS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Health  
 17      and Human Services shall award a grant to each State  
 18      to carry out a program in the Administration on Children  
 19      and Families for the purpose of making 2-1-1 telephone  
 20      service available to all citizens in the State for information  
 21      and referral on human services. These grant dollars shall  
 22      not supplant existing funding streams or services.

23       (b) GRANT TO BE AVAILABLE FOR EACH STATE.—  
 24      In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall  
 25      develop a formula for allocating grant amounts among the

1 States so that a grant may be awarded to each State seek-  
2 ing a grant.

3 (c) REQUIREMENT ON SHARE OF ACTIVITIES.—

4 (1) REQUIREMENT.—A State may not be  
5 awarded a grant under this section unless the State  
6 ensures that at least 50 percent of the resources of  
7 the program funded by the grant will be derived  
8 from other sources.

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

12 (d) LEAD ENTITY.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—A State seeking a grant  
14 under this section shall carry out this section  
15 through a lead entity meeting the requirements of  
16 this subsection.

17 (2) 2-1-1 COLLABORATIVE.—An entity shall be  
18 treated as the 2-1-1 Collaborative for a State under  
19 this subsection if the entity—

20 (A) exists for such purpose under State  
21 law;

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

1 (C) is a collaborative entity established by  
 2 the State for such purpose from among rep-  
 3 resentatives of—

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

6 (ii) State agencies;

7 (iii) community-based organizations;

8 (iv) faith-based organizations;

9 (v) not-for-profit organizations;

10 (vi) comprehensive and specialized in-  
 11 formation and referral providers, including  
 12 current 2–1–1 call centers;

13 (vii) foundations; and

14 (viii) businesses.

15 (3) REQUIREMENTS FOR PREEXISTING LEAD  
 16 ENTITIES.—An entity described by subparagraph  
 17 (A) or (B) of paragraph (2) may be treated as a  
 18 lead entity under this subsection only if such entity  
 19 collaborates, to the extent practicable, with the orga-  
 20 nizations and entities listed in subparagraph (C) of  
 21 that paragraph.

22 (e) APPLICATION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The lead entity on behalf of  
 24 each State seeking a grant under this section shall

1 submit to the Secretary an application therefore in  
2 such form as the Secretary shall require.

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

6 (A) Information on the program to be car-  
7 ried out by the lead entity of the State so that  
8 every citizen with phone service may dial the 2-  
9 1-1 telephone service in order to plan to make  
10 available throughout the State 2-1-1 telephone  
11 service for information and referral on human  
12 services, including information on the manner  
13 in which the lead entity will develop, sustain,  
14 and evaluate the program.

15 (B) Information on the sources of re-  
16 sources for the program for purposes of meet-  
17 ing the requirement in subsection (c).

18 (C) There should be a statewide database  
19 available to all citizens as well as all human  
20 service programs, through the Internet, that  
21 will allow them to search for programs or serv-  
22 ices that are available according to the data  
23 gathered by the 2-1-1 programs in the State.

1 (D) 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 the collection and display of infor-  
17 mation for the statewide database.

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

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

23 (B) the extent to which the award of the  
24 subgrant will facilitate equitable geographic dis-  
25 tribution of subgrants under this section to en-

1           sure that rural communities have access to 2-  
2           1-1 telephone service; and

3                   (C) the extent to which the recipient of the  
4           subgrant will establish and maintain cooperative  
5           relationships with specialized information and  
6           referral centers, including Child Care Resource  
7           Referral Agencies, crisis centers, 9-1-1 call  
8           centers, and 3-1-1 call centers, if applicable.

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

10                   (1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts awarded as grants  
11           or subgrants under this section shall be used solely  
12           to make available 2-1-1 telephone service for com-  
13           munity information and referral on human services  
14           to all citizens of the State with phone access, includ-  
15           ing telephone connections between families and indi-  
16           viduals seeking such services and the providers of  
17           such services.

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

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

1           tems (AIRS) Accreditation and Operating 2–1–  
2           1 Systems; and

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

8           (3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts of a subgrant  
9           under subsection (e) may be used by grantees for  
10          Statewide and regional planning, start-up costs (in-  
11          cluding costs of software and hardware upgrades  
12          and telecommunications costs), training, accredita-  
13          tion, public awareness, evaluation of activities, Inter-  
14          net hosting and site development and maintenance  
15          for a statewide database, database integration  
16          projects that incorporate data from different 2–1–1  
17          programs to a single statewide database, and the  
18          provision of 2–1–1 telephone service.

19          (h) REQUIREMENT ON ALLOCATION OF GRANT  
20          AMOUNTS.—Of the amounts awarded under this section,  
21          an aggregate of not more than 15 percent shall be allo-  
22          cated for evaluation, training, and technical assistance,  
23          and for management and administration of subgrants  
24          awarded under this section.

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

6 (1) describe the program funding by the grant;

7 (2) assess the effectiveness of the program in  
8 making available to all citizens with phone service  
9 State 2–1–1 telephone service for information and  
10 referral on human services in accordance with the  
11 provisions of this section; and

12 (3) assess the effectiveness of collaboration with  
13 human service resource and referral entities and  
14 service providers.

15 (j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

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

22 (B) Services that support personal and so-  
23 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, for fiscal years 2006 and  
 24 2007, \$150,000,000, and for each of fiscal years 2008  
 25 through 2011, \$100,000,000.

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

○