

Committee Print

[SHOWING THE TEXT OF H.R. 4194 AS FORWARDED BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY ON MARCH 10, 2020]

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4194

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to direct the Federal Communications Commission to designate 9–8–8 as the universal telephone number for the purpose of the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system operating through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and through the Veterans Crisis Line, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 20, 2019

Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. GIANFORTE, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CISNEROS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COLE, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. DEFazio, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mrs. RODGERS of Washington, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ROSE of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. RYAN, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SOTO, Mr. STEIL, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. TURNER, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALTZ, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to direct the Federal Communications Commission to designate 9–8–

8 as the universal telephone number for the purpose of the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system operating through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and through the Veterans Crisis Line, 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 “National Suicide Hot-
5 line Designation Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) According to the American Foundation for
9 Suicide Prevention, on average, there are 129 sui-
10 cides per day in the United States.

11 (2) To prevent future suicides, it is critical to
12 transition the cumbersome, existing 10-digit Na-
13 tional Suicide Hotline to a universal, easy-to-remem-
14 ber, 3-digit phone number and connect people in cri-
15 sis with life-saving resources.

16 (3) It is essential that people in the United
17 States have access to a 3-digit national suicide hot-
18 line across all geographic locations.

19 (4) The designated suicide hotline number will
20 need to be both familiar and recognizable to all peo-
21 ple in the United States.

1 **SEC. 3. UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR NATIONAL**
2 **SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH**
3 **CRISIS HOTLINE SYSTEM.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 251(e) of the Commu-
5 nications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251(e)) is amended by
6 adding at the end the following:

7 “(4) UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR NA-
8 TIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH
9 CRISIS HOTLINE SYSTEM.—9–8–8 is designated as
10 the universal telephone number within the United
11 States for the purpose of the national suicide pre-
12 vention and mental health crisis hotline system oper-
13 ating through the National Suicide Prevention Life-
14 line maintained by the Assistant Secretary for Men-
15 tal Health and Substance Use under section 520E–
16 3 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
17 290bb–36c) and through the Veterans Crisis Line
18 maintained by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
19 under section 1720F(h) of title 38, United States
20 Code.”.

21 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
22 subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 1 year
23 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

24 (c) REQUIRED REPORT.—Not later than 180 days
25 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant
26 Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use and the

1 Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly submit a report
2 that details the resources necessary to make the use of
3 9–8–8, as designated under paragraph (4) of section
4 251(e) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C.
5 251(e)), as added by subsection (a) of this section, oper-
6 ational and effective across the United States to—

7 (1) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
8 Transportation of the Senate;

9 (2) the Committee on Appropriations of the
10 Senate;

11 (3) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of
12 the House of Representatives; and

13 (4) the Committee on Appropriations of the
14 House of Representatives.

15 **SEC. 4. STATE AUTHORITY OVER FEES.**

16 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—

17 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this Act, any
18 amendment made by this Act, the Communications
19 Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), or any Com-
20 mission regulation or order may prevent the imposi-
21 tion and collection of a fee or charge applicable to
22 a commercial mobile service or an IP-enabled voice
23 service specifically designated by a State, a political
24 subdivision of a State, an Indian Tribe, or village or
25 regional corporation serving a region established

1 pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement
2 Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) for the support or im-
3 plementation of 9–8–8 services, if the fee or charge
4 is held in a sequestered account to be obligated or
5 expended only in support of 9–8–8 services, or en-
6 hancements of such services, as specified in the pro-
7 vision of State or local law adopting the fee or
8 charge.

9 (2) LIMIT ON FEE OR CHARGE.—For each class
10 of subscribers to IP-enabled voice services, the fee or
11 charge may not exceed the amount of any such fee
12 or charge applicable to the same class of subscribers
13 to telecommunications services.

14 (b) FEE ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT.—To ensure effi-
15 ciency, transparency, and accountability in the collection
16 and expenditure of a fee or charge for the support or im-
17 plementation of 9–8–8 services, not later than 2 years
18 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually
19 thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the Commit-
20 tees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Ap-
21 propriations of the Senate and the Committees on Energy
22 and Commerce and Appropriations of the House of Rep-
23 resentatives a report that—

24 (1) details the status in each State of the collec-
25 tion and distribution of such fees or charges, includ-

1 ing a detailed report about how those fees or charges
2 are being used to support 9–8–8 services; and

3 (2) includes findings on the amount of revenues
4 obligated or expended by each State or political sub-
5 division thereof for any purpose other than the pur-
6 pose for which any such fees or charges are speci-
7 fied.

8 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) COMMERCIAL MOBILE SERVICE.—The term
10 “commercial mobile service” has the meaning given
11 that term under section 332(d) of the Communica-
12 tions Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)).

13 (2) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
14 means the Federal Communications Commission.

15 (3) IP-ENABLED VOICE SERVICE.—The term
16 “IP-enabled voice service” shall include—

17 (A) an interconnected VoIP service, as de-
18 fined in section 9.3 of the title 47 of the Code
19 of Federal Regulations, or any successor there-
20 to; and

21 (B) a one-way interconnected VoIP service.

22 (4) STATE.—The term “State” has the mean-
23 ing given that term in section 7 of the Wireless
24 Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999 (47
25 U.S.C. 615b).

1 (5) TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE.—The
2 term “telecommunications service” has the meaning
3 given that term in section 3 of the Communications
4 Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153).

5 **SEC. 5. LOCATION IDENTIFICATION REPORT.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
7 date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Commu-
8 nications Commission shall submit to the appropriate com-
9 mittees a report that examines the feasibility and cost of
10 including an automatic dispatchable location that would
11 be conveyed with a 9–8–8 call, regardless of the techno-
12 logical platform used and including with calls from multi-
13 line telephone systems (as defined in section 6502 of the
14 Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012
15 (47 U.S.C. 1471)).

16 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES.—The term
18 “appropriate committees” means the following:

19 (A) The Committee on Commerce, Science,
20 and Transportation of the Senate.

21 (B) The Committee on Health, Education,
22 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.

23 (C) The Committee on Energy and Com-
24 merce of the House of Representatives.

1 (2) DISPATCHABLE LOCATION.—The term
2 “dispatchable location” means the street address of
3 the calling party and additional information such as
4 room number, floor number, or similar information
5 necessary to adequately identify the location of the
6 calling party.

7 **SEC. 6. REPORT ON CERTAIN TRAINING PROGRAMS.**

8 (a) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the
9 Congress that—

10 (1) youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual,
11 transgender, or queer (referred to in this section as
12 “LGBTQ”) are more than 4 times more likely to
13 contemplate suicide than their peers;

14 (2) 1 in 5 LGBTQ youth and more than 1 in
15 3 transgender youth report attempting suicide this
16 past year; and

17 (3) the Substance Abuse and Mental Health
18 Services Administration must be equipped to provide
19 specialized resources to this at-risk community.

20 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
21 of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary for
22 Mental Health and Substance Use shall submit to the
23 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of
24 the Senate, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
25 and Pensions of the Senate, and the Committee on Energy

1 and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report
2 that—

3 (1) details a strategy, to be developed in con-
4 sultation with 1 or more organizations with expertise
5 in suicide of LGBTQ youth as well as 1 or more or-
6 ganizations with expertise in suicide of other high
7 risk populations, for the Substance Abuse and Men-
8 tal Health Services Administration to offer, support,
9 or provide technical assistance to training programs
10 for National Suicide Prevention Lifeline counselors
11 to increase competency in serving LGBTQ youth
12 and other high risk populations; and

13 (2) includes recommendations regarding—

14 (A) the facilitation of access to services
15 that are provided to specially trained staff and
16 partner organizations for LGBTQ individuals
17 and other high risk populations; and

18 (B) a strategy for optimally implementing
19 an Integrated Voice Response, or other equally
20 effective mechanism, to allow National Suicide
21 Prevention Lifeline callers who are LGBTQ
22 youth or members of other high risk popu-
23 lations to access specialized services.