



**Testimony of  
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CTIA**

**Oregon House Bill 3069**

**Before the  
Oregon House Committee on Behavioral Health**

**March 31, 2021**

Chair and committee members, on behalf of CTIA®, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 3069. CTIA and its member companies support the designation of 988 as the three-digit dial for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. CTIA member companies are committed to implementing network changes to ensure Americans can dial 988 when in crisis.

CTIA and its members also understand the importance of a workable state 988 funding framework that includes 988 fees, state appropriations, and federal funds. We look forward to working with the sponsor on language to address the allowable uses of funds generated from 988 fees on wireless and other telephone subscribers. CTIA recommends that funds from the 988 fee be limited to funding equipment, communications services, and direct costs for crisis hotline center personnel for 988 call taking and appropriate call routing.

CTIA does not oppose the use of 988 fees to pay for the direct costs for crisis center services noted above but wants to ensure the fee is kept within reason and justified by data



showing the costs to fund equipment, communications services, and the direct costs for crisis center personnel.

Further, we look forward to working with the sponsor on language that will ensure the effective collection and administration of the state 988 fee. For example, carriers collecting and remitting the 988 fee should be allowed to use a single line item on consumers' bills to collect 911 and 988 fees so long as there is sufficient separation of both funds to ensure they are not commingled. The 988 fee should also be extended to wireline services as wireline customers will have access to 988. This will also allow the rate to be lower across all telecommunications service customers.

Moreover, there should be a single statewide fee, and local governments should be explicitly preempted in state law from imposing local 988 fees. This will ensure Oregon wireless consumer taxes and fees are kept within reason, particularly in light of the recent increase in the 911 fee from 75 cents to \$1.25 per line per month and the recent expansion of the 7 percent state Universal Service Fund charge to wireless service. Finally, language should be added extending liability protections for communications service providers similar to language in the 911 statute.

In closing, we welcome the opportunity to work with the sponsor to address the issues raised in my testimony. The wireless industry looks forward to the successful implementation of 988 to help our fellow Americans in crisis. Thank you for your consideration.