

The Calling for 2-1-1 Act
Sample Letter to Representatives
DATE

The Honorable [full name]
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative [last name]:

I am writing to ask for your support of *The Calling for 2-1-1 Act* (HR 3111), introduced by Representatives Richard Burr and Anna Eshoo. The legislation would authorize \$200 million in federal funding to bring 2-1-1 to the nation.

2-1-1, an easy to remember telephone number that connects people with important community services and volunteer opportunities, is a cost-effective answer to help people navigate the complex and evergrowing maze of human service agencies and programs. Where 2-1-1 is operational, people can cut through red tape to gain access to a full range of community resources. By making these services easier to access, 2-1-1 encourages prevention and fosters self-sufficiency and civic engagement. It's efficient, fast, and easy. 2-1-1 can further be used as a community planning tool. Based on aggregate data about the types of calls a 2-1-1 Center receives, communities are in a better position to anticipate demand for services and mobilize resources to meet changing needs. United Ways and Information and Referral providers across the country are working with diverse partners to build this service nationwide.

In July 2000, the Federal Communications Commission assigned the three-digit dialing code 2-1-1 to be used exclusively for community information and referral purposes. This service is available to 23 percent of the population with call centers operating in 22 states. 2-1-1 remains perhaps the best-kept secret in essential community services, even though the FCC in 2000 endorsed taking 2-1-1 national and despite the ever growing demand for 2-1-1 as an asset for homeland security and disaster recovery needs. Despite this demonstrated need for 2-1-1, limited resources remains the key barrier to sustainability and nationwide implementation.

[INSERT LOCAL INFORMATION ABOUT 2-1-1]

A fully realized nationwide 2-1-1 system will not happen without the support of the federal government, in partnership with states, as provided by *The Calling for 2-1-1 Act*. Current funding where 2-1-1 is operational comes from diverse sources including non-profits, state and local governments, foundations, and businesses. The dedicated federal funding stream to build and sustain 2-1-1 provided in this legislation will help to foster the public-private partnership necessary to make 2-1-1 available to 100 percent of the population.

Please cosponsor *The Calling for 2-1-1 Act* and support our efforts to bring this valuable service to the nation.

Sincerely,