

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4040

As Passed House:

February 13, 2004

Brief Description: Requesting congress to pass a federal 211 act.

Sponsors: By Representatives Pettigrew, Priest, Kagi, Jarrett, Tom, Benson, Miloscia, Darneille, Ormsby, Morrell and O'Brien.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 2/5/04 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/04, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Respectfully prays that Congress immediately pass the "Calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2003," H.R. 3111 and S. 1630.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Boldt, Ranking Minority Member; Roach, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Dickerson, Miloscia, Pettigrew and Shabro.

Staff: Cynthia Forland (786-7152).

Background:

Abbreviated dialing codes enable callers to connect to a location in the phone network that otherwise would be accessible only via a seven- or 10-digit telephone number. Among abbreviated dialing arrangements, "N11" codes are three-digit codes of which the first digit can be any digit other than one or zero, and the last two digits are both one. There are only eight possible N11 codes, making N11 codes among the scarcest of numbering resources.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has exclusive jurisdiction over numbering administration, including the assignment of N11 codes. The FCC has

assigned 211 for community information and referral services.

In 2003, ESHB 1787 was enacted, creating the 211 dialing code as the official state dialing code for public access to information and referral for health and human services and information about access to services after a natural or non-natural disaster. Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1787 required the not-for-profit Washington Information Network 211 to study, design, implement, and support a statewide 211 system, and annually report to the Legislature and the Department of Social and Health Services beginning July 1, 2004.

House Resolution 3111 and S. 1630, which may each be cited as the "Calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2003," have been introduced in the United States House of Representatives and Senate, respectively, in order to facilitate nationwide availability of 211 telephone service for information and referral on human services.

Summary of Bill:

The Senate and the House of Representatives recognize the following:

- The process of connecting those living and working in Washington with needed human and social services can be simplified by the establishment of a 211 telephone dialing option.
- Washington Information Network 211 seeks to create a statewide 211 system using existing information and referral providers.
- In 2003, the Legislature overwhelmingly supported and passed an act supporting 211 development and implementation for the residents of the state.
- Congress recognizes the value and broad public benefits of 211 through the inclusion of 211 service in the "Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002."

The Senate and the House of Representatives respectfully pray that Congress immediately pass the "Calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2003," H.R. 3111 and S. 1630.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: (In support) Since the Legislature passed ESHB 1787 last session, the Washington Information Network 211 has made tremendous progress towards implementing a statewide 211 system. Implementation for demonstration sites is scheduled for the end of this year, with statewide implementation by the end of next year. If passed, H.R. 3111 and S. 1630 would provide a secure base of federal funding and sustainable support for 211 networks.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Tom Page, Washington Information Network 2-1-1.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.