

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to improve the accessibility of 9–8–8, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. PADILLA introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to improve the accessibility of 9–8–8, 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 “Local 9–8–8 Response
5 Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. 9–8–8 IMPROVEMENT.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) 9–8–8.—The term “9–8–8” means 9–8–8,
9 as designated as the universal telephone number
10 within the United States for the purpose of the na-

1 tional suicide prevention and mental health crisis
2 hotline system under section 251(e)(4) of the Com-
3 munications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 251(e)(4)).

4 (2) COMMERCIAL MOBILE SERVICE.—The term
5 “commercial mobile service” has the meaning given
6 the term in section 332(d) of the Communications
7 Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)).

8 (3) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
9 means the Federal Communications Commission.

10 (4) NON-SERVICE-INITIALIZED HANDSET.—The
11 term “non-service-initialized handset” has the mean-
12 ing given that term in section 9.10(o)(3)(i) of title
13 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor
14 regulation.

15 (b) PROXIMITY-BASED ROUTING.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall—

17 (A) not later than 1 year after the date of
18 enactment of this Act, initiate the rulemaking
19 process for regulations to ensure that each
20 phone call, text message, and chat made or sent
21 from a provider of commercial mobile service to
22 9–8–8 is geographically routed by the provider
23 to the termination point designated by the par-
24 ticipating crisis center that is responsible for

1 the geographic location from which the phone
2 call, text message, or chat originated; and

3 (B) not later than 180 days after initiating
4 the rulemaking process under subparagraph
5 (A), issue final regulations.

6 (2) PRIVACY PROTECTIONS.—In promulgating
7 regulations under paragraph (1), the Commission
8 shall—

9 (A) protect the privacy of individuals who
10 contact 9–8–8 by ensuring that a phone call,
11 text message, or chat made or sent to 9–8–8
12 does not reveal the precise location of the indi-
13 vidual who made or sent the phone call, text
14 message, or chat; and

15 (B) ensure that the geographic location
16 used to route the 9-8-8 call, text message, or
17 chat is accurate enough to determine the proper
18 participating crisis center without revealing the
19 precise location of the individual who made or
20 sent the phone call, text message, or chat.

21 (c) TRANSMISSION OF ALL CALLS AND TEXTS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days
23 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commis-
24 sion shall promulgate regulations to ensure that
25 each phone call and text message made or sent to

1 9–8–8 is routed to a participating crisis center that
2 is near the geographic area from which the phone
3 call or text message originated.

4 (2) IMPLEMENTATION.—A provider of commer-
5 cial mobile service shall comply with the regulations
6 promulgated under paragraph (1) not later than 1
7 year after the date on which the regulations are pro-
8 mulgated.

9 (d) CONFIGURATION OF MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE
10 SYSTEMS FOR DIRECT DIALING.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 721 of the Commu-
12 nications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 623) is amended—

13 (A) in the section heading, by inserting
14 “**AND 9–8–8**” after “**9–1–1**”;

15 (B) in subsection (a), by inserting “or 9–
16 8–8” after “9–1–1”; and

17 (C) in subsection (b), by inserting “or 9–
18 8–8” after “9–1–1”.

19 (2) APPLICABILITY.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made
21 by paragraph (1) shall apply to actions occur-
22 ring on and after the date that is 2 years after
23 the date of enactment of this Act.

24 (B) EXCEPTION.—The amendment made
25 by paragraph (1)(C) shall not apply to the

1 management or operation of a multi-line tele-
2 phone system installed before the date that is 2
3 years after the date of enactment of this Act,
4 if the system is not able to be configured to sat-
5 isfy the requirements of the amendment, with-
6 out an improvement to the hardware or soft-
7 ware of the system.