

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 7074

By Campbell

A RESOLUTION to support and raise public awareness of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, on July 16, 2022, the Federal Communications Commission activated 988 as the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number for persons with mental health or substance abuse crises; and

WHEREAS, 988 is staffed twenty-four-hours a day, seven days a week with trained mental health personnel who are available for electronic chat, text messages, or telephone calls for those in crisis; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee has six call centers serving all ninety-five counties, with a seventh call center being added in West Tennessee, with backup coverage in each county; and

WHEREAS, in Tennessee, for fiscal year 2022, over 35,000 calls were received, and for the first half of fiscal year 2023, over 23,000 were received with a concomitant decrease in emergency department presentations and law enforcement involvement for mental health concerns, demonstrating a real need for such a service with a streamlined point of entry for mental health assistance; and

WHEREAS, more than 95 percent of 988 calls are stabilized without any in-person intervention or response required; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to raise public awareness, the Tennessee Medical Association has officially advocated that physicians, particularly psychiatrists and primary care physicians, promote the use of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number by offering it as an option to callers on their outgoing message from call centers, answering machines, or voicemails; and

WHEREAS, Tennesseans need access to better mental health care services, and sadly, many of our fellow citizens do not know that the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is readily available during a mental health crisis; and

WHEREAS, it is of vital importance that we raise public awareness of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we strongly support and encourage the use of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number in Tennessee and join with the Tennessee Medical Association in its efforts to raise public awareness of this valuable resource for our citizens.