

1 HJR168
2 212415-2
3 By Representatives Ledbetter, Ellis, Lovvorn, Stringer,
4 Faulkner, Wood (R), Hall, Estes, Garrett, Rafferty, Nordgren,
5 Farley, Grimsley, Kitchens, Reynolds, Whitt, Moore (P),
6 Daniels, Gray and Easterbrook
7 RFD: Rules
8 First Read: 01-APR-21

1
2 ENROLLED, House Joint Resolution,

3 CREATING THE STUDY COMMISSION ON THE 9-8-8
4 COMPREHENSIVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM.
5

6 WHEREAS, in August 2018, the United States Congress
7 passed the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018,
8 requiring the Federal Communications Commission to study the
9 feasibility of designating a simple, easy-to-remember
10 three-digit dialing code for a newly re-designated National
11 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline System,
12 the call number for which is currently 1-800-273-8255 (TALK);
13 and

14 WHEREAS, in August 2019, the final Federal
15 Communications Commission report to Congress proposed that
16 "9-8-8" be the designated number, and proposed regulations
17 published in January 2020 made that recommendation formally;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, in October 2020, the President signed the
20 National Suicide Hotline Designation Act (Public Law No:
21 116-172), making the 9-8-8 line the universal telephone number
22 for the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis
23 hotline system; and

24 WHEREAS, implementation of the three-digit call
25 number will make crisis services instantly accessible and

1 thereby more effective in responding to mental health crises,
2 suicidal ideations, and drug overdoses; and

3 WHEREAS, the 9-8-8 line will be nationally
4 implemented on July 16, 2022, as required by the National
5 Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020; and

6 WHEREAS, Alabama, in complying with the National
7 Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 and the Federal
8 Communications Commission's rules adopted July 16, 2020, will
9 ensure that all Alabamians receive consistent and effective
10 behavioral health crisis services no matter where they live,
11 work, or travel in the state; and

12 WHEREAS, Alabama seeks to develop and maintain
13 access to a statewide crisis system of care that is
14 interconnected, effective, and just; now therefore,

15 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
16 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Study Commission on the
17 9-8-8 Comprehensive Behavioral Health Crisis Communication
18 System is established.

19 (a) The purpose of the Study Commission on the 9-8-8
20 Comprehensive Behavioral Health Crisis Communication System is
21 to study and provide recommendations for the implementation of
22 the 9-8-8 system to enhance and expand behavioral health
23 crisis response and suicide prevention services before it is
24 nationally implemented on July 16, 2022 as required in Public

1 Law No: 116-172. The commission shall consider all of the
2 following:

3 (1) How twenty-four seven statewide coverage for
4 9-8-8 calls, chats, and texts could be achieved in each
5 county.

6 (2) Strategies for identifying and supporting
7 investment in new technology to triage calls and link
8 individuals to follow-up care.

9 (3) Funding to boost the financial stability and
10 sustainability of call centers and evidence-based crisis
11 services in every county, so that people experiencing
12 behavioral health crises can receive higher quality support.

13 (4) Increasing of capacity at the call centers
14 answering 9-8-8 contacts, for long-term improvement of answer
15 rates for 9-8-8 calls.

16 (5) Requirements for compliance with the National
17 Suicide Prevention Lifeline Requirements and Best Practices
18 Guidelines for Operational and Clinical Standards.

19 (6) Ways for call centers to maintain local resource
20 and referral listings and ensure linkages to local community
21 crisis services.

22 (7) Ways for centers to provide follow-up services
23 to 9-8-8 callers, texters, and chatters based on Lifeline best
24 practices and guidelines.

1 (8) Requirements for compliance with the National
2 Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 and the Federal
3 Communications Commission's rules adopted July 16, 2020 to
4 assure that all Alabama residents receive an effective level
5 of 9-8-8 and crisis behavioral health services no matter where
6 they live, work or travel in the state.

7 (b) The Study Commission on Alabama's 9-8-8
8 Comprehensive Behavioral Health Crisis Communication System
9 shall be comprised of the following members:

10 (1) The Commissioner of the Alabama Department of
11 Mental Health or his or her designee, who shall serve as chair
12 of the commission.

13 (2) The State Health Officer of the Alabama
14 Department of Public Health or his or her designee, who shall
15 serve as co-chair of the commission.

16 (3) Two members of the House of Representatives,
17 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

18 (4) Two members of the Senate, appointed by the
19 President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

20 (5) The Commissioner of the Alabama Department of
21 Veterans Affairs, or his or her designee.

22 (6) The Director of the Alabama Department of
23 Emergency Management, or his or her designee.

24 (7) The Secretary of the Alabama Law Enforcement
25 Agency, or his or her designee.

1 (8) The Governor of Alabama, or his or her designee.

2 (9) A representative of The Crisis Center.

3 (10) A representative from Crisis Services of North
4 Alabama.

5 (11) A representative of Family Counseling Center of
6 Mobile.

7 (12) Two representatives from the Alabama Council
8 for Behavioral Healthcare.

9 (13) One representative from the Behavioral
10 Healthcare Alliance of Alabama.

11 (14) One representative of the American Foundation
12 for Suicide Prevention, Alabama Chapter.

13 (15) One representative from the Alabama Department
14 of Human Resources.

15 (16) One representative from NAMI Alabama, also
16 known as the National Alliance on Mental Illness - Alabama.

17 (c) All appointing authorities shall coordinate
18 their appointments so that diversity of gender, race, and
19 geographical areas is reflective of the makeup of this state.

20 (d) The study commission shall meet as needed at the
21 call of the chair.

22 (e) Each member shall serve at the pleasure of his
23 or her appointing authority. A vacancy in the membership shall
24 be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

1 (f) Members of the commission shall serve without
2 compensation, but may be reimbursed for expenses as follows:

3 (1) The legislative members of the study commission
4 shall be entitled to their legislative compensation, per diem,
5 and travel expenses for each day they attend a meeting of the
6 study commission, in accordance with Amendment 871 of the
7 Constitution of Alabama of 1901.

8 (2) Other members of the commission may be
9 reimbursed for necessary expenses in attending meetings of the
10 commission according to policies and procedures of their
11 respective appointing authority.

12 (g) A majority of the members of the study
13 commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of
14 all business at a regular or special meeting.

15 (h) The study commission shall hold its initial
16 meeting no later than June 1, 2021. Each appointment made
17 shall be indicated to the Commissioner of the Alabama
18 Department of Mental Health (ADMH) no later than May 15, 2021.

19 (i) The commission chair or co-chair may ask the
20 ADMH commissioner for research or writing assistance from ADMH
21 staff.

22 (j) The study commission shall review the findings
23 of the 9-8-8 comprehensive behavioral health crisis
24 communication system landscape analysis submitted by ADMH. The
25 study commission shall submit a report of its findings and

1 recommendations to the Senate President Pro Tempore and the
2 Speaker of the House of Representatives on or before January
3 11, 2022, the first day of the 2022 Regular Legislative
4 Session, at which time it shall be dissolved.

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Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in
and was adopted by the House 13-APR-21.

Jeff Woodard
Clerk

Senate	22-APR-21	Amended and Passed
House	27-APR-21	Concurred in Senate Amendment