December 2, 2019

The Honorable Dave Loebsack  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1211 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Loebsack:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission’s efforts to adopt a new three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. Suicide is an epidemic in this country, with suicide rates reaching the highest levels seen since World War II. And suicide disproportionately affects at-risk populations like Veterans, LGBTQ youth, rural Americans, and others.

I believe that an easy-to-remember 3-digit number for emergency suicide prevention and mental health services would result in more people reaching out for assistance and would help to combat this crisis. That’s why last week, I circulated a draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice) to my fellow FCC Commissioners to move forward with the necessary steps to establish 988 as a national 3-digit number to access suicide prevention and mental health services. Under my proposal, anyone calling 988 would be routed to the established National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK), which is already saving lives. We’ll vote on this proposal at our December 12 Open Meeting.

As you note, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act tasked the FCC, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Mental Health and Substance Abuse and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, with examining and reporting on the technical feasibility of designating a simple, easy-to-remember 3-digit number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system. Consistent with the recommendations made by FCC staff in August 2019, the draft Notice would start the process of designating 988 as the 3-digit dialing code for this purpose. This designation will help increase the effectiveness of suicide prevention efforts, ease access to crisis services, reduce the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health conditions, and ultimately save lives.

In particular, the draft Notice proposes that all telecommunications carriers and interconnected VoIP providers be required to implement 988 in their networks within 18 months. In addition, if adopted, the Notice will seek public input on several implementation issues, such as ubiquitous nationwide deployment of 988, call routing requirements, dialing 988 in certain geographic areas, the implementation timeframe, and the costs of implementing 988 (which you mention in your letter as well). For your convenience, I have appended to this letter a copy of the draft Notice, which discusses these issues in greater detail. Please be assured that we will take into consideration your views and those of other stakeholders.
I look forward to working together as we move forward on a rulemaking to designate 988 as the three-digit dialing code for national suicide prevention. Working together, we can and we will save lives.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
Dear Congresswoman Matsui:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission’s efforts to adopt a new three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. Suicide is an epidemic in this country, with suicide rates reaching the highest levels seen since World War II. And suicide disproportionately affects at-risk populations like Veterans, LGBTQ youth, rural Americans, and others.

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Dear Congressman Butterfield:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Jerry McNerney  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2265 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McNerney:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission’s efforts to adopt a new three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. Suicide is an epidemic in this country, with suicide rates reaching the highest levels seen since World War II. And suicide disproportionately affects at-risk populations like Veterans, LGBTQ youth, rural Americans, and others.

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Ajit V. Pai
Dear Congressman Kennedy:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2463 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Tonko:

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Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Peter Welch  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2303 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Welch:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Tony Cárdenas  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2438 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Cárdenas:

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Ajit V. Pai
Dear Congresswoman Clarke:

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Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Robin Kelly  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1239 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Kelly:

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Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Ann McLane Kuster
U.S. House of Representatives
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Kuster:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo  
U.S. House of Representatives  
202 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Eshoo:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2188 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  

Dear Congressman Rush:

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As you note, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act tasked the FCC, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Mental Health and Substance Abuse and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, with examining and reporting on the technical feasibility of designating a simple, easy-to-remember 3-digit number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system. Consistent with the recommendations made by FCC staff in August 2019, the draft Notice would start the process of designating 988 as the 3-digit dialing code for this purpose. This designation will help increase the effectiveness of suicide prevention efforts, ease access to crisis services, reduce the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health conditions, and ultimately save lives.

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I look forward to working together as we move forward on a rulemaking to designate 988 as the three-digit dialing code for national suicide prevention. Working together, we can and we will save lives.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Debbie Dingell
U.S. House of Representatives
116 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Dingell:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission’s efforts to adopt a new three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. Suicide is an epidemic in this country, with suicide rates reaching the highest levels seen since World War II. And suicide disproportionately affects at-risk populations like Veterans, LGBTQ youth, rural Americans, and others.

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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2367 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Schakowsky:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission’s efforts to adopt a new three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. Suicide is an epidemic in this country, with suicide rates reaching the highest levels seen since World War II. And suicide disproportionately affects at-risk populations like Veterans, LGBTQ youth, rural Americans, and others.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester
U.S. House of Representatives
1519 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Rochester:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
December 2, 2019

The Honorable Mike Doyle  
U.S. House of Representatives  
306 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Doyle:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Tom O'Halleran  
U.S. House of Representatives  
126 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  

Dear Congressman O'Halleran:

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