



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable Dan Sullivan
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sullivan:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018, particularly as it relates to the needs of the LGBTQ community and military veterans.

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. I'm pleased to report that at our December 12 Open Meeting, we adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice) 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.

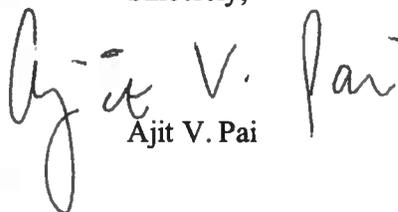
As you note, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act tasked the FCC, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Mental Health and Substance Abuse and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, with examining and reporting on the technical feasibility of designating a simple, 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 Notice starts 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, with respect to specialized hotline services for Veterans and LGBTQ youth, the Notice encourages interested stakeholders to work directly with SAMHSA, the VA, and Congress to foster collaboration and coordination of efforts to increase the overall effectiveness of the Lifeline, including any specialized hotline services for at-risk populations such as Veterans and LGBTQ youth. For your convenience, I have appended to this letter a copy of the Notice, which discusses these issues in greater detail. Please be assured that we will take into consideration your views and those of other stakeholders.

Page 2—The Honorable Dan Sullivan

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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

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THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018, particularly as it relates to the needs of the LGBTQ community and military veterans.

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. I'm pleased to report that at our December 12 Open Meeting, we adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Notice) 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.

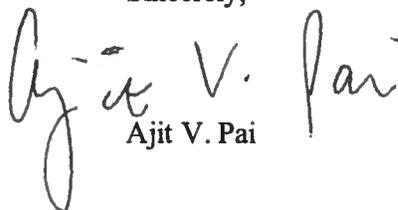
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Ajit V. Pai