

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Implementation of the National Suicide Hotline Act of 2018*, Fourth Report and Order, WC Docket No. 18-336 (July 24, 2025).

Three years ago last week, 988 went live as the new number for the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Since its launch, 988 has received 16.5 million contacts, including 11.1 million calls, 2.9 million texts, and 2.4 million chats.

I have had the opportunity to hear from frontline workers how 988 has helped to change the trajectory of peoples' lives. A few years ago, I visited a call center that answers over 100,000 calls to 988 every year. There, I met with Janet, one of the counselors, and her talented team of call takers. They emphasized that an easy to remember, three-digit code has significantly improved the ability for those in need to access the Lifeline's critical services.

But during that visit, Janet and her team flagged some challenges with the Lifeline, too. Specifically, they asked me to push the FCC to route calls based on the caller's location—not their area code. With mobile phones and number portability, the number that people call from may have an area code that doesn't match their actual geographic area. That means that someone calling the Lifeline living in one state could have their call or text routed to a help center in a completely different part of the country. This matters because local crisis centers are often better suited to help Lifeline users during the initial point of contact and with follow-up care in their communities.

In 2024, the Commission came together, and we started to fix this problem. We made sure that calls to 988 were routed based on the caller's location and not their area code. Today, we are taking the next step in this effort by extending georouting to text messages, further improving the effectiveness of 988.

I'm committed to making sure that this life-saving resource is there for anyone who needs it, including some populations, like young people and deaf or hard-of-hearing populations who primarily rely on text messaging.

As we make this change, we also want to ensure that people aren't worried about their privacy, which may discourage someone from reaching out to 988. With this in mind, the rules we adopt today require text providers to route calls based on aggregated data that does not identify the precise location of the initiating handset. I am confident the step we take today will save more lives, consistent with what we've seen from the prior enhancements to 988.

For their great work on this item, I'd like to thank Joseph Calascione, Stacy Jordan, Eugene Kiselev, Jodie May, Robert Martin, Zach Ross, Cara Voth, Rachel Wehr, and Merry Wulff.