Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 0589-2023	**Version:**	*	**Name:**	Mental Health Roadmap Legislative Package - Ensure that calls to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline program are routed based on geolocation rather than area code.
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Adopted
				In control:	Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction
On agenda:	4/27/2023				
Enactment date:				**Enactment #:**	
Title:	Resolution calling on the Federal Government to ensure that calls to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline program are routed based on geolocation rather than area code.				
Sponsors:					
Indexes:					
Attachments:	1. Res. No. 589, 2. April 27, 2023 - Stated Meeting Agenda, 3. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 4-27-23, 4. Minutes of the Stated Meeting - April 27, 2023, 5. Committee Report 5/4/23, 6. Hearing Testimony 5/4/23, 7. Hearing Transcript 5/4/23, 8. Committee Report 6/22/23, 9. Hearing Transcript 6/22/23, 10. June 22, 2023 - Stated Meeting Agenda, 11. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 6-22-23, 12. Minutes of the Stated Meeting - June 22, 2023				

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/27/2023	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
4/27/2023	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
5/4/2023	*	Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction	Laid Over by Committee	
5/4/2023	*	Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction	Hearing Held by Committee	
6/22/2023	*	Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction	Approved by Committee	Pass
6/22/2023	*	Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities and Addiction	Hearing Held by Committee	
6/22/2023	*	City Council	Approved, by Council	Pass

Res. No. 589

Resolution calling on the Federal Government to ensure that calls to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline program are routed based on geolocation rather than area code.

By Council Members Powers, Lee, Bottcher, Schulman, Rivera, Riley, Louis, Hudson, Ayala, Holden, Brewer, Ung, Joseph, Abreu, Farias, Avilés, Nurse and Dinowitz (in conjunction with the Brooklyn Borough President)

Whereas, According to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), the number of suicides in the U.S. increased 4 percent from 45,979 in 2020 to 47,646 in 2021, after two consecutive years of decline, and a 2022 CNN/Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that nine out of 10

adults believe there is a mental health crisis in the U.S., while both the CDC and the World Health Organization reported seeing a COVID-19 induced spike in mental health emergencies in the U.S. and worldwide; and

Whereas, The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline program ("988 Lifeline"), formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, is the national hotline for those in need of support during a suicidal, substance abuse, and/or mental health crisis or any other kind of emotional distress, and is funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ("SAMHSA"), administered by the nonprofit Vibrant Emotional Health ("Vibrant"), and managed by state and local entities; and

Whereas, NYC Well, New York City's suicide prevention hotline, is one of the local entities that operates within the 988 Lifeline network; and

Whereas, The designation of 988 as the national hotline, replacing the former number of 1-800-273-8255, is the result of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act signed in October 2020, and the Federal Communications Commission required telephone providers to make calling and texting 988 accessible by July 16, 2022; and

Whereas, People can reach the 988 Lifeline by calling or texting 988 or chatting at 988lifeline.org and be connected with a trained crisis counselor, and according to SAMHSA, as of December 1, 2022 there are around 200 local, independently owned and operated crisis centers in the 988 Lifeline network that receive calls, chats, and texts sent to the 988 Lifeline across the nation, with SAMHSA reporting that the 988 Lifeline received roughly 3.6 million contacts in Fiscal Year 2021; and

Whereas, SAMHSA found that most contacts to the 988 Lifeline are calls, with 2.4 million calls making up the 3.6 million contacts received in Fiscal Year 2021, and Vibrant reports that over 80% of calls received are from cell phones; and

Whereas, When receiving a call, the 988 Lifeline's phone system routes the call to the closest crisis center in the 988 Lifeline network based on the area code of the calling number, not on geolocation technology; and

Whereas, In December of 2020, Vibrant released a report which found that connecting callers to crisis centers is crucial in that doing so connects callers with invaluable resources and support during their mental health crises and thereby mitigates risks and harms stemming from their distress; and

Whereas, The same report included recommendations to process 988 Lifeline calls with geolocation technology because of how many calls come from cell phones, meaning area codes are not a reliable means of accurately locating someone calling the 988 Lifeline, thus routing callers to crisis centers that may not actually be local to them; and

Whereas, The FCC hosted a forum in May 2022 on geolocation for the 988 Lifeline, wherein Vibrant, SAHMSA, experts, and local crisis centers all mentioned the importance of accurately routing a call, stating reasons that included how the inaccurate location of a caller can inhibit the effectiveness of mental health crisis care by delaying access to much-needed care and resources in situations where a caller is not in the same locality as their area code, and that location accuracy is needed to properly judge 988 Lifeline performance metrics and areas of need within states; and

Whereas, The same forum revealed that individuals receive better support from local counselors because local counselors know their area and can quickly connect callers to nearby resources, can reference factors and events familiar to callers to more quickly build trusting connections, and can more easily provide follow-up care and other services that contribute to harm reduction and lessen suicide risk; and

Whereas, Accurately locating a caller is vital to prevent serious harm or death in the cases where callers are at immediate risk of suicide, with Vibrant stating that nearly 1% of callers to the 988 Lifeline are both at imminent risk of suicide and are unable or unwilling to provide their location; and

Whereas, Vibrant found that almost 90% of callers interviewed around 9 days on average after calling the 988 Lifeline stated that the 988 Lifeline helped stop them from killing themselves, and numerous studies of 988 Lifeline calls have shown that most callers were significantly more likely to feel less overwhelmed, depressed, and suicidal after speaking with a 988 Lifeline counselor, including a 2022 study where 89% of

those receiving service from NYC Well reported feeling satisfied with their overall experience; and

Whereas, Because the FCC governs whether the 988 Lifeline should or should not use geolocation technology, adjusting federal rules would allow state and local entities to activate and adopt geolocation capabilities and thus allow for more effective crisis care for both current and future callers to the 988 Lifeline; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the Federal Government to ensure that calls to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline program are routed based on geolocation rather than area code.

CCK
LS # 11717
03/29/2023