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February 1, 2010

T-00000A-10-0017

Commissioner Kristen K. Mayes  
Commissioner Sandra D. Kennedy  
Commissioner Paul Newman  
Commissioner Bob Stump  
Commissioner Gary Pierce  
Arizona Corporation Commission  
1200 W. Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007-2996

Arizona Corporation Commission

DOCKETED

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ARIZONA CORPORATION  
COMMISSION  
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Dear Commissioners Mayes, Kennedy, Newman, Stump, and Pierce,

This letter is to request that the Arizona Corporation Commission establish Community Information & Referral (CIR) organization as the 2-1-1 Service Provider and Lead Entity in the State of Arizona for 24/7 information and referral to health and human services.

Arizona needs the three-digit number 2-1-1 to help people in need, access health and human services quickly! Arizona is one of only 4 states without a 211 call dialing designate for public access to information about and get referrals to needed health and human service resources.

On July 31, 2001, the Federal Communications Commission assigned the three-digit dialing number 2-1-1 as the national telephone number for access to information about and referrals to human service organizations, declaring that "2-1-1 best satisfies the public interest in allotting the limited resource of this abbreviated telephone number".

2-1-1 is an easy to remember three-digit telephone number that is used to connect people in need to available health and human services. People looking for help often do not know where to start. Finding basic resources such as food, shelter, counseling, or health care can mean hours of calling multiple phone numbers and then sifting through a mass of information and telephone numbers. 2-1-1 makes it easy to find needed social services as well as connect those who want to volunteer or donate to community service organizations.

Currently in the United States, 46 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington D.C. have adopted the use of the 2-1-1 dialing code for public access to community information and referral service providers. Only Arizona, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and Delaware are not currently using the three-digit dialing code, however, each of these states is working on a 2-1-1 implementation plan. More than 80% of the American public now has access to health and human service providers through use of the 2-1-1 dialing code.

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By \_\_\_\_\_

2-1-1 is a fundamental enhancement of our nation's long-trusted and respected Information and Referral (I&R) service provider network. Professional I&R Call Center Specialists assess callers' needs, determine available social service resources, direct them to the appropriate programs and services, provide culturally appropriate support, intervene in critical situations, and advocate for the caller when necessary. 2-1-1s also make their searchable health and human resource databases available on-line through the internet and through other social networks.

Community Information & Referral (CIR) is an Arizona 501 (c)(3) non-profit social service organization founded in 1964 and incorporated in 1979. CIR offers people in need an easy link to information about and referrals to local health and human services available Statewide, 24 hours-a-day, 7 days a week via local and toll free telephone lines. CIR maintains a comprehensive health and human service resource database of over 2,500 social service organizations including governmental, non-profit, and faith based community services, including the 18,000 programs they offer statewide. This resource is also available on-line at [www.cir.org](http://www.cir.org). CIR is the only comprehensive information and referral service provider of its kind in Arizona.

CIR is one of 120 nationally accredited AIRS (Alliance of Information & Referral Systems) 2-1-1/I&R call centers in the United States. Thirty-three percent (33%) of its eligible I&R staff are AIRS Certified. On average, the CIR 24-hour Help Hotline responds to over 270,000 calls for help from Arizona residents each year. Calls for emergency utility assistance, domestic violence and homeless shelters, foreclosure assistance, community health clinics, and food, are among the most common sources of help sought.

Your action establishing CIR as the lead entity to use the 2-1-1 dialing code for public access to information and referral services will benefit all Arizonans. Your order recognizing Community Information & Referral as the Arizona provider of 2-1-1 information and referral services will have an extremely positive impact on how people who need help find help for years to come! Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Whiting  
Executive Director

cc: 2-1-1 Arizona Planning and Steering Collaborative Members  
CIR Board of Directors