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Commissioner Kristen K. Mayes

Commissioner Sandra D. Kennedy

Commissioner Paul Newman

Commissioner Bob Stump

Commissioner Gary Pierce

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By APR -7 2010

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AZ CORP COMMISSION  
DOCKET CONTROL

Arizona Corporation Commission

1200 W. Washington

Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

Dear Commissioners Mayes, Kennedy, Newman, Stump, and Pierce,

Arizona needs the three-digit number 2-1-1 to help people in need, access health and human services quickly! Arizona is one of 4 states without a 211 call dialing designate to access an information and referral service provider.

I write this letter to support Community Information & Referral's (CIR) petition to be designated the Statewide information and referral service provider and lead 2-1-1 entity in the State of Arizona.

2-1-1 is an easy to remember three-digit telephone number used in 46 states 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 is an easy to remember telephone number making it easy to find needed social services as well as connects those who want to volunteer or donate to community service organizations.

The utilization of 2-1-1 to access our nation's long-trusted and respected Information and Referral (I&R) service providers is a fundamental and extremely important enhancement. 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.

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. Calls for emergency utility assistance, domestic violence and homeless shelters, foreclosure assistance, community health clinics, and food are among the most common sources for help sought.

Arizona Corporation Commission

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Your order establishing CIR as the lead entity using the 2-1-1 dialing code for public access to information and referral services will greatly benefit all Arizonans.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chelsey Heath