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A bill to be entitled
 An act relating to the Florida 211 Network; amending s.
 408.918, F.S.; requiring the Florida 211 Network to
 provide services in each county and to coordinate services
 with county emergency operations centers during disasters;
 providing requirements for distribution of state funds
 appropriated for such purposes; requiring local matching
 funds; requiring expenditure reports to the Florida
 Alliance of Information and Referral Services, the Agency
 for Health Care Administration, and the Legislature;
 providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the 2002 Legislature created the "Florida Health
 and Human Services Access Act" in sections 408.911-408.918,
 Florida Statutes, and

WHEREAS, the act "authorizes the planning, development,
 and, subject to appropriations, the implementation of a
 statewide Florida 211 Network, which shall serve as the single
 point of coordination for information and referral for health
 and human services" in section 408.918(1), Florida Statutes, and

WHEREAS, in order to participate in the Florida 211
 Network, a 211 provider must be certified by the Agency for
 Health Care Administration under section 408.918(2), Florida
 Statutes, and

WHEREAS, 211 is the 911 telephone number for nonemergency
 health and human services and for crisis response information,
 is available in 36 counties, and represents 13.1 million people,
 or 77.5 percent of the state's population, and

29 WHEREAS, the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral
30 Services is the statewide membership organization in which all
31 211 providers participate and which has drafted the Florida 211
32 Network business plan identifying the most efficient processes
33 by which the Florida 211 Network should expand statewide, and

34 WHEREAS, 211 providers, who answer 3 million telephone
35 inquiries about human services annually, have compiled
36 information on thousands of human services programs across the
37 state, and

38 WHEREAS, 211 call centers make it easier for 11 million
39 Floridians to get the information they need to keep them out of
40 emergency rooms, off government assistance, out of "deep-end"
41 social services programs, safe from abuse, and in stable
42 housing, and

43 WHEREAS, 211 call centers also help people find job
44 training and assistance, elder care and child care, and before-
45 school and after-school care that allow them to stay employed,
46 and

47 WHEREAS, during the 2004 hurricanes, 211 call centers
48 provided critically needed support to many emergency operations
49 centers, provided information to more than 100,000 Floridians
50 impacted by hurricanes, were instrumental in identifying unmet
51 and emerging needs, and helped mobilize and manage volunteers,
52 and

53 WHEREAS, 211 will continue to be a critical part of
54 recovery efforts, providing a connection to help for people
55 whose lives have been dramatically affected by the 2004
56 hurricanes, NOW, THEREFORE,

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Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 408.918, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

408.918 Florida 211 Network; uniform certification requirements.--

(1) The Legislature finds that a statewide Florida 211 Network would be of great benefit to Floridians, particularly in times of disaster, and authorizes the planning, development, and, subject to appropriations, the implementation of a statewide Florida 211 Network, which shall serve as the single point of coordination for information and referral for health and human services. The objectives for establishing the Florida 211 Network shall be to:

(a) Provide comprehensive and cost-effective access to health and human services information.

(b) Improve access to accurate information by simplifying and enhancing state and local health and human services information and referral systems and by fostering collaboration among information and referral systems.

(c) Electronically connect local information and referral systems to each other, to service providers, and to consumers of information and referral services.

(d) Establish and promote standards for data collection and for distributing information among state and local organizations.

84 (e) Promote the use of a common dialing access code and
 85 the visibility and public awareness of the availability of
 86 information and referral services.

87 (f) Provide a management and administrative structure to
 88 support the Florida 211 Network and establish technical
 89 assistance, training, and support programs for information and
 90 referral-service programs.

91 (g) Test methods for integrating information and referral
 92 services with local and state health and human services programs
 93 and for consolidating and streamlining eligibility and case
 94 management processes.

95 (h) Provide access to standardized, comprehensive data to
 96 assist in identifying gaps and needs in health and human
 97 services programs.

98 (i) Provide a unified systems plan with a developed
 99 platform, taxonomy, and standards for data management and
 100 access.

101 (2) In order to participate in the Florida 211 Network, a
 102 211 provider must be certified by the Agency for Health Care
 103 Administration. The agency shall develop criteria for
 104 certification, as recommended by the Florida Alliance of
 105 Information and Referral Services, and shall adopt the criteria
 106 as administrative rules.

107 (a) If any provider of information and referral services
 108 or other entity leases a 211 number from a local exchange
 109 company and is not certified by the agency, the agency shall,
 110 after consultation with the local exchange company and the
 111 Public Service Commission, request that the Federal

112 Communications Commission direct the local exchange company to
 113 revoke the use of the 211 number.

114 (b) The agency shall seek the assistance and guidance of
 115 the Public Service Commission and the Federal Communications
 116 Commission in resolving any disputes arising over jurisdiction
 117 related to 211 numbers.

118 (3)(a) The Florida 211 Network shall be expanded statewide
 119 to provide services in each county. Each 211 provider and each
 120 county emergency operations center in the 211 service area shall
 121 execute memoranda of agreement specifying how they will
 122 coordinate in the event of a disaster.

123 (b) To implement the Florida 211 Network business plan,
 124 the agency shall distribute to the Florida Alliance of
 125 Information and Referral Services funds appropriated to the
 126 agency to expand the Florida 211 Network statewide and to
 127 enhance operations of existing 211 providers. The funds
 128 distributed to the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral
 129 Services shall be made available to counties on a matching
 130 basis, with each county required to provide \$1 for each \$1
 131 provided to that county from state funds appropriated for that
 132 purpose. At a minimum, the funds shall be used to achieve
 133 statewide 211 coverage.

134 (c)1. No later than December 15, 2005, each county that
 135 receives funding under this subsection shall report to the
 136 Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services the
 137 expenditure of the state funds on a form developed by the
 138 agency.

139 2. No later than January 1, 2006, the Florida Alliance of

HB 0751

2005

140 Information and Referral Services shall provide a statewide
141 report to the agency that includes the individual reports and
142 aggregated data provided by the counties.

143 3. No later than January 15, 2006, the agency shall submit
144 a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
145 Speaker of the House of Representatives detailing expenditure of
146 the funds appropriated to it for the purposes of this
147 subsection.

148 Section 2. The sum of \$5 million is appropriated from the
149 General Revenue Fund to the Agency for Health Care
150 Administration to fund the statewide expansion of the Florida
151 211 Network to all counties and to enhance the operations of
152 existing 211 providers pursuant to s. 408.918, Florida Statutes,
153 as amended by this act.

154 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.