

CHAMBER ACTION

1 The Health Care Appropriations Committee recommends the
2 following:

3
4 **Council/Committee Substitute**

5 Remove the entire bill and insert:

6 A bill to be entitled

7 An act relating to the Florida 211 Network; amending s.
8 408.918, F.S.; requiring the Florida 211 Network to
9 provide services in each county and to coordinate services
10 with county emergency management agencies during
11 disasters; providing requirements for distribution of
12 state funds appropriated for such purposes; requiring
13 local matching funds; requiring expenditure reports to the
14 Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services, the
15 Agency for Health Care Administration, and the
16 Legislature; providing an appropriation; providing an
17 effective date.

18
19 WHEREAS, the 2002 Legislature created the "Florida Health
20 and Human Services Access Act" in sections 408.911-408.918,
21 Florida Statutes, and

22 WHEREAS, the act "authorizes the planning, development,
23 and, subject to appropriations, the implementation of a

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24 statewide Florida 211 Network, which shall serve as the single
25 point of coordination for information and referral for health
26 and human services" in section 408.918(1), Florida Statutes, and

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

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

35 WHEREAS, the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral
36 Services is the statewide membership organization in which all
37 211 providers participate and which has drafted the Florida 211
38 Network business plan identifying the most efficient processes
39 by which the Florida 211 Network should expand statewide, and

40 WHEREAS, 211 providers, who answer 3 million telephone
41 inquiries about human services annually, have compiled
42 information on thousands of human services programs across the
43 state, and

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

49 WHEREAS, 211 call centers also help people find job
50 training and assistance, elder care and child care, and before-

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51 school and after-school care that allow them to stay employed,
52 and

53 WHEREAS, during the 2004 hurricanes, 211 call centers
54 provided critically needed support to many emergency management
55 agencies, provided information to more than 100,000 Floridians
56 impacted by hurricanes, were instrumental in identifying unmet
57 and emerging needs, and helped mobilize and manage volunteers,
58 and

59 WHEREAS, 211 will continue to be a critical part of
60 recovery efforts, providing a connection to help for people
61 whose lives have been dramatically affected by the 2004
62 hurricanes, NOW, THEREFORE,

63
64 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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

68 408.918 Florida 211 Network; uniform certification
69 requirements.--

70 (1) The Legislature finds that a statewide Florida 211
71 Network would be of great benefit to Floridians, particularly in
72 times of disaster, and authorizes the planning, development,
73 and, subject to appropriations, the implementation of a
74 statewide Florida 211 Network, which shall serve as the single
75 point of coordination for information and referral for health
76 and human services. The objectives for establishing the Florida
77 211 Network shall be to:

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

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

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

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

90 (e) Promote the use of a common dialing access code and
91 the visibility and public awareness of the availability of
92 information and referral services.

93 (f) Provide a management and administrative structure to
94 support the Florida 211 Network and establish technical
95 assistance, training, and support programs for information and
96 referral-service programs.

97 (g) Test methods for integrating information and referral
98 services with local and state health and human services programs
99 and for consolidating and streamlining eligibility and case
100 management processes.

101 (h) Provide access to standardized, comprehensive data to
102 assist in identifying gaps and needs in health and human
103 services programs.

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104 (i) Provide a unified systems plan with a developed
105 platform, taxonomy, and standards for data management and
106 access.

107 (2) In order to participate in the Florida 211 Network, a
108 211 provider must be certified by the Agency for Health Care
109 Administration. The agency shall develop criteria for
110 certification, as recommended by the Florida Alliance of
111 Information and Referral Services, and shall adopt the criteria
112 as administrative rules.

113 (a) If any provider of information and referral services
114 or other entity leases a 211 number from a local exchange
115 company and is not certified by the agency, the agency shall,
116 after consultation with the local exchange company and the
117 Public Service Commission, request that the Federal
118 Communications Commission direct the local exchange company to
119 revoke the use of the 211 number.

120 (b) The agency shall seek the assistance and guidance of
121 the Public Service Commission and the Federal Communications
122 Commission in resolving any disputes arising over jurisdiction
123 related to 211 numbers.

124 (3)(a) The Florida 211 Network shall be expanded statewide
125 to provide services in each county. Each 211 provider shall
126 coordinate with each county emergency management agency in the
127 211 service area to determine how the Florida 211 Network may be
128 used in the event of a disaster.

129 (b) To implement the Florida 211 Network business plan,
130 the agency shall distribute to the Florida Alliance of
131 Information and Referral Services funds appropriated to the

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132 agency to expand the Florida 211 Network statewide and to
133 enhance operations of existing 211 providers. The funds
134 distributed to the Florida Alliance of Information and Referral
135 Services shall be made available to 211 providers on a matching
136 basis, with each 211 provider required to provide \$1 for each \$1
137 provided to that 211 provider from state funds appropriated for
138 that purpose. At a minimum, the funds shall be used to achieve
139 statewide coverage.

140 (c)1. No later than December 15, 2005, each 211 provider
141 that receives funding under this subsection shall report to the
142 Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services the
143 expenditure of the state funds on a form developed by the
144 agency.

145 2. No later than January 1, 2006, the Florida Alliance of
146 Information and Referral Services shall provide a statewide
147 report to the agency that includes the individual reports and
148 aggregated data provided by the 211 providers.

149 3. No later than January 15, 2006, the agency shall submit
150 a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
151 Speaker of the House of Representatives detailing expenditure of
152 the funds appropriated to it for the purposes of this
153 subsection.

154 Section 2. The sum of \$5 million is appropriated for
155 fiscal year 2005-2006 from the General Revenue Fund to the
156 Agency for Health Care Administration to fund the statewide
157 expansion of the Florida 211 Network to all counties and to
158 enhance the operations of existing 211 providers pursuant to s.
159 408.918, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act.

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