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CHAMBER ACTION

1 The Utilities & Telecommunications 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, the Governor, and
16 the Legislature; defining the term "211 provider";
17 providing an appropriation; providing an 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 42 counties, and represents 14.7 million people,
34 or 82.5 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 have compiled information on
41 thousands of human services programs across the state, and

42 WHEREAS, 211 call centers make it easier for more than 14
43 million Floridians to get the information they need to keep them
44 out of emergency rooms, off government assistance, out of "deep-
45 end" social services programs, safe from abuse, and in stable
46 housing, and

47 WHEREAS, 211 call centers also help people find job
48 training and assistance, elder care and child care, and before-
49 school and after-school care that allow them to stay employed,
50 and

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51 WHEREAS, during the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, 211
52 call centers provided critically needed support to many
53 emergency operations centers, provided information to Floridians
54 impacted by hurricanes, were instrumental in identifying unmet
55 and emerging needs, and helped mobilize and manage volunteers,
56 and

57 WHEREAS, 211 call centers will continue to be a critical
58 part of recovery efforts, providing a connection to help for
59 people whose lives have been dramatically affected by the 2005
60 hurricanes, NOW, THEREFORE,

61

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

63

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

66 408.918 Florida 211 Network; uniform certification
67 requirements.--

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

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

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78 (b) Improve access to accurate information by simplifying
79 and enhancing state and local health and human services
80 information and referral systems and by fostering collaboration
81 among information and referral systems, including those serving
82 persons with disabilities and special health care needs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

123 (3) (a) The Florida 211 Network shall be expanded statewide
124 to provide services in each county. Each 211 provider shall
125 coordinate with each county emergency management agency in the
126 211 service area to determine how the Florida 211 Network may be
127 used in the event of a disaster, including how a 211 provider
128 will respond with information that is essential to assisting
129 individuals during a natural disaster.

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

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

141 (c)1. No later than December 15, 2006, each 211 provider
142 that receives funding under this subsection shall report to the
143 Florida Alliance of Information and Referral Services the
144 expenditure of the state funds on a form developed by the
145 agency.

146 2. No later than January 1, 2007, the Florida Alliance of
147 Information and Referral Services shall provide a statewide
148 report to the agency which includes the individual reports and
149 aggregated data provided by the 211 providers.

150 3. No later than January 15, 2007, the agency shall submit
151 a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
152 Speaker of the House of Representatives detailing expenditure of
153 the funds appropriated to it for the purposes of this
154 subsection.

155 (4) As used in this section, the term "211 provider" means
156 an information and referral organization the primary purpose of
157 which is to maintain information about human service resources
158 in the community, supply descriptive information about the
159 agencies or organizations that offer such services, and assist
160 consumers in accessing appropriate providers of such services.

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161 Section 2. The sum of \$5 million is appropriated for the
162 2006-2007 fiscal year from nonrecurring general revenue to the
163 Agency for Health Care Administration to fund the statewide
164 expansion of the Florida 211 Network to all counties and to
165 enhance the operations of existing 211 providers under s.
166 408.918, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act. Any funds
167 that are not encumbered for the 2006-2007 fiscal year shall
168 revert on June 30, 2007, and are reappropriated for the 2007-
169 2008 fiscal year for the same purposes.

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