



STATE of RHODE ISLAND
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Legislative Impact Statement

To: Senator Murray, Chairperson
From: Elisabeth Hubbard, Executive Secretary
Re: 26 Senate 3058 AN ACT RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE,
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND HOSPITALS -- CORE STATE BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH CRISIS SERVICES SYSTEMS-988

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities' Legislation Committee has developed a Legislative Impact Statement on the bill listed below. The Commission would be pleased to present testimony to the committee. Please contact me (462-0110) if testimony is desired or for additional information.

Introduced by Senator Murray

Establishes a core state behavioral health crisis services system to be administered by the director of the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals.

Legislation Committee finds this bill Beneficial

988 is a lifeline that people who are experiencing a mental health crisis can call. It allows people to speak to trained crisis counselors who can listen. Counselors are also familiar with behavioral health resources in Rhode Island and can direct people to the most appropriate care. The connection with a counselor is immediate and anonymous. It offers a more accessible alternative to going to an emergency room if one is having a mental health crisis.

The program has been successful, handling over 13,000 calls in its first two years. The original funding came from the American Rescue Plan and the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. Unfortunately, these sources of funding were only temporary and are predicted to be discontinued by the Department of Health and Human Services.

More stable funding would maintain these essential services, continuing to save lives and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.