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# Ohio Heartland Prevention Network

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PUCO

March 31, 2000

Alan R. Schriber, Chair  
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793

REC'D

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OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN  
P.U.C.O.

Re: Case No. 93-1799-TP-C01

Dear Dr. Schriber,

We are writing in support of the PUCO's March 23, 2000 decision regarding the petition filed by the 211 Ohio Collaborative asking the PUCO to designate "211" as the three-digit access number for non-emergency community referrals throughout Ohio.

Ohio Information & Referral organizations already respond to over a half a million calls per year from Ohioans in crisis or struggling with ongoing problems and needing referrals to resources in their community. In addition to numerous listings in area telephone books, many organizations offer and promote a variety of 800 numbers, making the search for help even more overwhelming. Because navigating the maze of community services can be a daunting task, a simple, reliable, universally recognizable access number will make all the difference for a person in need. The ability of Ohioans to dial 211 for community service referrals will end the frustration and confusion and ensure that they get the help they need as soon as possible.

We welcome the PUCO's granting of the two-year pilot use of 211 for community access and see it as an important opportunity to make it easier for our most vulnerable citizens to find the assistance they require.

We appreciate this opportunity to share out thoughts on this important issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Bridget T. McDaniels  
Executive Director

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