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**United Way  
of Knox County, Inc.**

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PUCO

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April 3, 2000

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

**REC'D**

APR 05 2000

OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN  
P.U.C.O.

RE: Case Number 93-1799-TP-COI

Dear Dr. Schriber:

I am writing in support of the petition filed by the 211 Ohio Collaborative which asks the PUCO to designate "211" as the three-digit access number for non-emergency community service referrals throughout Ohio.

Ohio Information and 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. Many of these organizations spend thousands of dollars every year promoting a variety of 800 numbers. Designating 211 as a universal access number for community service referrals would save money and more importantly, help Ohioans get the help they need as soon as possible. It would end the frustration and confusion of where to call for help and could reduce the number of inappropriate 911 calls.

Designating 211 as a statewide community service referral number makes sense and matches other regional and national initiatives. I encourage the PUCO to carefully consider this petition as an important opportunity to make it easier for our most vulnerable citizens to find the help they need. Thank you for your consideration of the 211 Ohio Collaborative's petition.

Sincerely,

Kellie J. Amlin  
Executive Director