



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
Margaret M. O'Neill Bldg., Third Floor, Suite 1
410 Federal Street
Dover, Delaware 19901
302-739-3621


The Honorable John Carney,
Governor

John McNeal, Director
SCPD

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 30, 2023

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Mr. Benjamin Shrader, Chairperson 
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: HB 160 (Behavioral Health Crisis System of Care Funding)

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed HB 160 which seeks to provide a sustained source of funding that directly goes toward supporting the implementation of 988 and making sure people (children and adults) experiencing a behavioral health crisis have someone to call, someone to respond, and somewhere to go. This bill was introduced and assigned to the Health & Human Development Committee in House on May 16, 2023.

SCPD recognizes that the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 established 988 as the universal phone number for “the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system operating through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.” HB 160 will provide a framework to maximize 988 to provide crucial support to Delawareans in need.

The legislation will do four things:

- Implement a \$0.60 monthly surcharge on phone access lines and also on prepaid communications service retail transactions.

- Establish the Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Services Fund, where the surcharge will be deposited.
- Create the Behavioral Health Crisis Services Intervention Board, made up of state agencies and community stakeholders, co-chaired by DSAMH and DPBH and housed/staffed by DSAMH.
- Create the Behavioral Health Crisis Communications Center, which aims to consolidate behavioral health crisis lines and services into one location continuously operated to receive 988 calls as well as any other communication related to behavioral health.

SCPD endorses this bill as providing for the mental health of persons with disabilities remains a necessary priority. The SCPD is also slated as a participating agency on the Behavioral Health Crisis Services Board.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our position or observations on the proposed legislation.

cc: Ms. Laura Waterland, Esq.
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

HB 160 Behavioral Health Crisis 5-30-23