

Rep. Mitzi Johnson, House Speaker  
 Sen. Tim Ashe, Senate President Pro-Tem  
 Vermont State House  
 115 State Street  
 Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

**RE: Reduction in VT-211 after-hours call-in & referral services**

Dear Speaker Johnson and President Pro-Tem Ashe:

It has been brought to our attention that Vermont 211 has cut back its hours of service to 8am to 8pm, with no service after that time and no service at all on weekends or holidays. The reason for such is financial. Vermont 211 had been subcontracting out its post-8pm, weekends and holiday service to an out-of-state entity, which has decided no longer to provide this service. In searching for another provider, or for Vermont 211 to provide the service directly, the cost of such is coming in at or near \$300,000 above the current state appropriation for Vermont 211.

It is absolutely crucial that 211's service to Vermonters who are homeless and/or fleeing sexual and domestic violence be restored to 24 hours per day, every day of the week. In calendar year 2018 there were 3,514 after-hours calls to 211 between 8pm and 8am, weekends and on State holidays from people requesting emergency housing, with 75% of those calls coming during the coldest months of the year (November through April). 40% of all after-hours calls were related to emergency housing. The individuals and families calling 211 are truly among the most vulnerable in our state, and with winter only weeks away, it is more important than ever that the Legislature act swiftly and use the budget adjustment process to provide the funding necessary.

The consequences of doing nothing could be dire: Vermonters experiencing homelessness freezing to death without shelter and people fleeing domestic or sexual violence suffering serious harm without access to emergency housing.

Any of us are more than willing to come to Montpelier during a future hearing to testify about the importance of restoring Vermont 211 to its full capabilities.

Sincerely:

Addison County Community Trust  
 American Red Cross - Vermont  
 Another Way  
 At Wits End Family Support Group  
 Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless  
 Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing Corp.  
 Brattleboro Area Prevention Coalition  
 Brattleboro Community Justice Center  
 Burlington Police Department  
 Buster Caswell  
 Cathedral Square Corporation  
 Champlain Housing Trust  
 Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

Committee on Temporary Shelter  
 Community of Vermont Elders  
 Disability Rights Vermont  
 Downstreet Housing & Community Development  
 Elizabeth Gilman  
 Essex CHIPS  
 First Baptist Church, Rutland  
 Franklin/Grand Isle Community Action  
 Good Samaritan Haven  
 Green Mountain United Way  
 Groundworks Collaborative  
 Help Me Grow  
 HOPE

HOPE Works  
Housing Vermont  
Hunger Free Vermont  
Institute for Community Alliances  
Jennifer Montagne  
John Graham Housing & Services  
Katie Ballard  
KIN-KAN Vermont  
Lamoille Family Center  
Lamoille Housing Partnership  
Linda C. Vincent  
Mayumi Cornell  
Montpelier Housing Authority  
Morgan W. Brown  
NAMI Vermont  
NeighborWorks of Western Vermont  
Northeast Kingdom Community Action  
Pathways Vermont  
Peterson Consulting, Inc.  
Project Against Violent Encounters  
Randolph Area Community Development Corp.  
Ren Vanwagner  
Rights & Democracy  
Robert McDonald  
RuralEdge  
Rutland County Parent Child Center  
Rutland Housing Authority  
Safeline, Inc.  
Samaritan House, Inc  
Sara Kobylenski  
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging  
Spectrum Youth & Family Services  
Springfield Area Parent Child Center  
Springfield Supported Housing Program  
State Independent Living Council  
Supportive Services for Veteran Families at UVM  
Terry Holden  
The Housing Foundation, Inc.  
The Mentor Connector  
Three Generations Collaboration

Town of Brattleboro  
Turning Point Center of Rutland  
Twin Pines Housing  
Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission  
United Way of Addison County  
United Way of Lamoille County  
United Way of Rutland County  
United Way of Windham County  
United Ways of Vermont/Vermont 211  
Upper Valley Haven  
Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition  
Vermont Alliance for Recovery Residences  
Vermont Center for Independent Living  
Vermont Coalition of Runaway & Homeless Youth Programs  
Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance  
Vermont Family Network  
Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
Vermont Foodbank  
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board  
Vermont Housing Finance Agency  
Vermont Interfaith Action  
Vermont Legal Aid, Inc.  
Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council  
Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Vermont People With AIDS Coalition  
Vermont State Housing Authority  
Veterans, Inc.  
Vital Communities  
Voices for Vermont's Children  
Washington County Young Adult Committee, Inc.  
West River Valley Thrives  
Windham & Windsor Housing Trust  
Windham Regional Commission  
Windsor County Youth Services  
Women's Freedom Center  
Wonderfeet Kids' Museum  
Youth Services, Inc.