



**Testimony of  
GERARD KEEGAN  
CTIA**

**Kansas House Bill 2281**

**Before the  
Kansas House Committee on Health & Human Services**

**February 22, 2021**

Chair and committee members, on behalf of CTIA®, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, thank you for the opportunity to discuss House Bill 2281. CTIA and its member companies support the designation of 988 as the three-digit dial for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. CTIA member companies are committed to implementing network changes to ensure Americans can dial 988 when in crisis. In fact, some of my members have already implemented 988 well before the Federal Communications Commission deadline.

CTIA and its members also understand the importance of a workable state 988 funding framework. We look forward to working with the committee on language to address the allowable uses of the 988 fund. We need more information on the particular functions that the 988 fee will support - as the bill language appears to be very broad, which concerns us. We recommend that the 988 fee be tailored to fund equipment, communications, and direct costs for crisis hotline center personnel for 988 call taking and appropriate call routing.



CTIA does not oppose the implementation of a 988 fee to pay for the above referenced services but wants to ensure the fee is kept within reason and justified by data. This is especially important for Kansas wireless consumers who already face the sixth highest government tax and fee burden in the country. Kansas wireless consumers pay over 26 percent of their bills in government taxes and fees, so it is important that fees be kept as low as possible.

Further, we look forward to working with the committee on language that will ensure the effective collection and administration of the state 988 fee. For example, carriers should be allowed to use a single line item on consumers' bills to collect 911 and 988 fees so long as there is sufficient separation of both funds to ensure they are not commingled. CTIA would also support the extension of the 988 fee to prepaid wireless services so long as the collection and administration of the 988 fee follows the point-of-sale methodology for 911 fee collection. This would allow retailers and marketplace facilitators to use a single line item on consumer receipts for both the 911 and 988 fees. Including prepaid wireless will also allow the rate to be lower on all services.

In closing, we welcome the opportunity to work with the committee to address the issues raised in my testimony. The wireless industry looks forward to the successful implementation of 988 to help our fellow Americans in crisis. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.