

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 72

Session of  
1977

INTRODUCED BY KOLTER, MILANOVICH, ZWIKL, LAUGHLIN, DOMBROWSKI,  
McCALL, BERLIN, PETRARCA, A. K. HUTCHINSON, IRVIS, MANDERINO,  
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LETTERMAN, REED, DININNI, CESSAR, POTT, ZEARFOSS, COWELL,  
MEBUS, BURD, STAIRS, W. D. HUTCHINSON, ZELLER, WILSON,  
O'KEEFE, LOGUE, HELFRICK, MADIGAN, HALVERSON, PRATT,  
MELUSKEY, RUGGIERO, FISCHER AND BURNS, FEBRUARY 7, 1977

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND WELFARE, FEBRUARY 7, 1977

AN ACT

1 Relating to the implementation of the emergency telephone number  
2 "911"; providing a title; providing an intent; providing for  
3 a State plan; providing a system director; providing for  
4 telephone industry coordination; providing for coin telephone  
5 conversion; providing for system approval; and providing an  
6 appropriation.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Emergency  
11 Telephone Act."

12 Section 2. Legislative intent.

13 The Legislature hereby finds and declares that it is in the  
14 public interest to shorten the time required for a citizen to  
15 request and receive emergency aid. There currently exist  
16 thousands of different emergency phone numbers throughout the  
17 Commonwealth. Providing for a single, primary three-digit

1 emergency number through which emergency services can be quickly  
2 and efficiently obtained would provide a significant  
3 contribution to law enforcement and other public efforts by  
4 making it easier to notify emergency center personnel. Such a  
5 simplified means of procuring emergency services will result in  
6 the saving of life, and reduction in the destruction of  
7 property, and quicker apprehension of criminals. It is the  
8 intent of the Legislature to establish and implement a cohesive  
9 Statewide emergency telephone number "911" plan which will  
10 provide citizens with rapid direct access to public emergency  
11 operation centers by dialing the telephone number "911," with  
12 the objective of reducing the response time to situations  
13 requiring law enforcement, fire, medical, rescue, and other  
14 emergency services.

15 Section 3. Definitions.

16 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
17 have, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the  
18 meanings given to them in this section:

19 "Agency" means that element of the Governor's Office  
20 designated by the Governor to carry out the purposes of this  
21 act.

22 "Local government" means any political subdivision or any  
23 combination or group thereof.

24 "Public agency" means the State, and any city, county, city  
25 and county, municipal corporation, chartered organization,  
26 public district, or public authority located in whole or in part  
27 within this Commonwealth which provides or has authority to  
28 provide fire fighting, law enforcement, ambulance, medical, or  
29 other emergency services.

30 "Public safety agency" means a functional division of a

1 public agency which provides fire fighting, law enforcement,  
2 medical, or other emergency services.

3 Section 4. State plan.

4 The agency shall develop a Statewide emergency telephone  
5 number "911" system plan within 18 months of the effective date  
6 of this act. The plan shall provide for:

7 (1) The establishment of the public agency emergency  
8 telephone communications requirements for each entity of  
9 local government in the State.

10 (2) A system to meet specific local government  
11 requirements. Such system shall include law enforcement, fire  
12 fighting, and emergency medical services, and may include  
13 other emergency services such as poison control, suicide  
14 prevention, and civil defense services.

15 (3) Identification of the mutual aid agreements  
16 necessary to obtain an effective "911" system.

17 (4) A funding provision which shall identify the cost  
18 necessary to implement the "911" system.

19 (5) A firm implementation schedule which shall provide  
20 for full implementation of the Statewide emergency telephone  
21 number "911" system within seven years of the effective date  
22 of this act. The schedule shall be staggered to permit  
23 orderly implementation and to accommodate local variances.  
24 Each public agency designated in the plan shall order the  
25 "911" system from the telephone utility within three months  
26 of the date specified in the plan for that public agency. In  
27 placing such order each State agency shall comply with the  
28 provisions of the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175),  
29 known as "The Administrative Code of 1929," or other  
30 applicable provision of law. Installation of such system

1 shall be within 24 months after such order has been placed.

2 The agency shall be responsible for the coordination and  
3 implementation of such plan. The agency shall promulgate any  
4 necessary rules, regulations, and schedules related to public  
5 agencies for implementing and coordinating such plan.

6 Section 5. System director.

7 The head of the agency designated by the Governor to carry  
8 out the purposes of this act is designated as the director of  
9 the Statewide emergency telephone number "911" system and, for  
10 the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act, is  
11 authorized to coordinate the activities of the system with  
12 State, county, local, and private agencies. For the purposes of  
13 this act the director is authorized to employ professional and  
14 clerical persons, to designate a deputy systems director, to  
15 establish an operational project team, and, within the  
16 limitations imposed by The Administrative Code of 1929 to hire  
17 professional consultants. The director in implementing the  
18 system shall consult, cooperate and coordinate with local law  
19 enforcement agencies, emergency medical agencies, fire service  
20 agencies and other emergency agencies.

21 Section 6. Regional systems.

22 Nothing in this act shall be construed to prohibit or  
23 discourage the formation of multijurisdictional or regional  
24 systems; and any system established pursuant to this act may  
25 include the jurisdiction, or any portion thereof, of more than  
26 one public agency.

27 Section 7. Telephone industry coordination.

28 The director shall coordinate with the Pennsylvania Public  
29 Utility Commission which shall direct the Pennsylvania telephone  
30 industry to activate facility modification plans for a timely

1 "911" implementation.

2 Section 8. Coin telephones.

3 The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission shall establish  
4 rules to be followed by the telephone utilities in Pennsylvania  
5 designed toward directing the provision of coin free dialing of  
6 "911" calls wherever economically practicable and in the public  
7 interest.

8 Section 9. System approval.

9 From the effective date of this act, no emergency telephone  
10 number "911" system shall be established and no present system  
11 shall be expanded without prior approval of the director.

12 Section 10. Compliance.

13 All public agencies shall assist the agency in their efforts  
14 to carry out the intent of this act, and such agencies shall  
15 comply with the developed plan.

16 Section 11. Appropriation.

17 The sum of \$150,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to  
18 the agency to carry out the purposes of this act. This  
19 appropriation shall be for the fiscal year 1977-1978.

20 Section 12. Effective date.

21 This act shall take effect immediately.