

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 72

Session of
1977

INTRODUCED BY MESSRS. KOLTER, MILANOVICH, ZWIKL, LAUGHLIN, DOMBROWSKI, McCALL, BERLIN, PETRARCA, A. K. HUTCHINSON, IRVIS, MANDERINO, A. C. FOSTER, BITTINGER, ZORD, MRS. KELLY, MESSRS. SCHMITT, KLINGAMAN, 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

AS RE-REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, APRIL 13, 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

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

16 Section 3. Definitions.

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

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

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

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

1 "Public safety agency" means a functional division of a
2 public agency which provides fire fighting, law enforcement,
3 medical, or other emergency services.

4 Section 4. State plan.

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

8 (1) The establishment of the public agency emergency
9 telephone communications requirements for each entity of
10 local government in the State; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT ALL <—
11 APPLICANTS FOR THE SERVICE HEREIN ESTABLISHED SHALL MAKE
12 ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE TELEPHONE UTILITY INVOLVED TO SERVE THE
13 ENTIRE CENTRAL OFFICE DISTRICT OR DISTRICTS OF SAID UTILITY.

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

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

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

23 ~~(5) A firm implementation schedule which shall provide <—~~
24 ~~for full implementation of the Statewide emergency telephone~~
25 ~~number "911" system within seven years of the effective date~~
26 ~~of this act. The schedule shall be staggered to permit~~
27 ~~orderly implementation and to accommodate local variances.~~
28 ~~Each public agency designated in the plan shall order the~~
29 ~~"911" system from the telephone utility within three months~~
30 ~~of the date specified in the plan for that public agency. In~~

~~placing such order each State agency shall comply with the provisions of the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as "The Administrative Code of 1929," or other applicable provision of law. Installation of such system shall be within 24 months after such order has been placed. The agency shall be responsible for the coordination and implementation of such plan. The agency shall promulgate any necessary rules, regulations, and schedules related to public agencies for implementing and coordinating such plan.~~

~~Section 5. System director.~~

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

~~Section 6. Regional systems.~~

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

1 ~~Section 7. Telephone industry coordination.~~

2 ~~The director shall coordinate with the Pennsylvania Public~~
3 ~~Utility Commission which shall direct the Pennsylvania telephone~~
4 ~~industry to activate facility modification plans for a timely~~
5 ~~"911" implementation.~~

6 ~~Section 8. Coin telephones.~~

7 ~~The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission shall establish~~
8 ~~rules to be followed by the telephone utilities in Pennsylvania~~
9 ~~designed toward directing the provision of coin free dialing of~~
10 ~~"911" calls wherever economically practicable and in the public~~
11 ~~interest.~~

12 ~~Section 9. System approval.~~

13 ~~From the effective date of this act, no emergency telephone~~
14 ~~number "911" system shall be established and no present system~~
15 ~~shall be expanded without prior approval of the director.~~

16 ~~Section 10. Compliance.~~

17 ~~All public agencies shall assist the agency in their efforts~~
18 ~~to carry out the intent of this act, and such agencies shall~~
19 ~~comply with the developed plan.~~

20 ~~Section 11. Appropriation.~~

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

24 ~~Section 12. Effective date.~~

25 ~~This act shall take effect immediately.~~

26 (5) A SCHEDULE WHICH SHALL PROVIDE FOR FULL <—
27 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATEWIDE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER
28 "911" SYSTEM PLAN WITHIN SEVEN YEARS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF
29 THIS ACT. THE SCHEDULE SHALL BE DESIGNED TO PERMIT ORDERLY
30 IMPLEMENTATION AND TO ACCOMMODATE LOCAL VARIANCES.

1 SECTION 5. AGENCY FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

2 THE AGENCY DESIGNATED BY THE GOVERNOR TO CARRY OUT THE
3 PURPOSES OF THIS ACT SHALL PROMULGATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
4 ACT OF JULY 31, 1968 (P.L.769, NO.240), KNOWN AS THE
5 "COMMONWEALTH DOCUMENTS LAW," THE NECESSARY RULES, PROCEDURES,
6 AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULES RELATING TO PUBLIC AGENCIES
7 FOR IMPLEMENTING AND ADMINISTERING THE PLAN. SAID AGENCY SHALL
8 ALSO HAVE A DIRECTOR WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CARRYING OUT THE
9 PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT. HE SHALL COORDINATE THE PLAN DEVELOPMENT
10 AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYSTEM WITH STATE, COUNTY, LOCAL, AND
11 PRIVATE AGENCIES. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS ACT, THE DIRECTOR IS
12 AUTHORIZED TO EMPLOY PROFESSIONAL AND CLERICAL PERSONS IN SUCH
13 STAFF CAPACITIES AS REQUIRED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OR PROJECT TEAM
14 OPERATIONS AND TO HIRE PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS PURSUANT TO THE
15 LIMITATIONS PRESCRIBED IN THE ACT OF APRIL 9, 1929 (P.L.177,
16 NO.175), KNOWN AS "THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF 1929". THE
17 DIRECTOR SHALL ALSO COORDINATE WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC
18 UTILITY COMMISSION AND WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA TELEPHONE UTILITY
19 OR UTILITIES INVOLVED FOR A TIMELY IMPLEMENTATION OF "911".
20 NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS ACT SHALL BE CONSTRUED, OR IS INTENDED
21 TO BE CONSTRUED, TO LIMIT THE JURISDICTION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA
22 PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OVER THE PENNSYLVANIA TELEPHONE
23 UTILITY INVOLVED OR IN SUCH UTILITY'S PARTICIPATION IN SAID
24 IMPLEMENTATION OF "911".

25 SECTION 6. COIN TELEPHONES.

26 THE PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION SHALL ESTABLISH
27 RULES TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE TELEPHONE UTILITIES IN PENNSYLVANIA
28 DESIGNED TOWARD DIRECTING THE PROVISION OF COIN FREE DIALING OF
29 "911" CALLS WHEREVER ECONOMICALLY PRACTICABLE AND IN THE PUBLIC
30 INTEREST.

1 SECTION 7. SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION.

2 FROM THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ACT, ALL EMERGENCY TELEPHONE
3 NUMBER "911" SYSTEMS SHALL BE ESTABLISHED OR EXPANDED IN
4 CONSONANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE STATEWIDE EMERGENCY
5 TELEPHONE NUMBER "911" SYSTEM PLAN. PRELIMINARY REVIEW AND
6 APPROVAL PROCEDURES SHALL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE AGENCY AS
7 PROVIDED IN THIS ACT AND IMPLEMENTATION OR EXPANSION OF SUCH
8 "911" SYSTEMS SHALL BE EFFECTED BY A PUBLIC AGENCY ONLY
9 SUBSEQUENT TO SUCH REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR COMPATIBILITY WITH
10 THE STATEWIDE PLAN. NOTHING IN THIS ACT SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO
11 PROHIBIT OR DISCOURAGE THE FORMATION OF MULTIJURISDICTIONAL OR
12 REGIONAL SYSTEMS, AND ANY SYSTEM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS
13 ACT MAY INCLUDE THE JURISDICTION, OR ANY PORTION THEREOF, OF
14 MORE THAN ONE PUBLIC AGENCY.

15 SECTION 8. COMPLIANCE.

16 THE AGENCY SHALL ASSIST ALL PUBLIC AGENCIES IN THEIR EFFORTS
17 TO CARRY OUT THE INTENT OF THIS ACT TO INSURE COMPLIANCE BY SUCH
18 AGENCIES WITH THE STATEWIDE PLAN.

19 SECTION 9. APPROPRIATION.

20 THE SUM OF \$150,000 IS APPROPRIATED FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO
21 THE AGENCY TO CARRY OUT THE PURPOSE OF THIS ACT. THIS
22 APPROPRIATION SHALL BE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 1977-1978.

23 SECTION 10. EFFECTIVE DATE.

24 THIS ACT SHALL TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY.