

Ohio 211 Introduction and Statewide Coalition | Kristina Scott – United Way of Greater Cincinnati

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairman Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for allowing us all to submit testimony on House Bill 33 in support of amendment SC0436 and for allowing us to testify as a panel.

I am Kristina Scott, and I live in Dayton and work in Cincinnati as the Public Policy and Advocacy Director at United Way of Greater Cincinnati.

Our panel is testifying on behalf of Ohio's 14 211 call centers, and we are requesting \$2 million in annual state funding to support Ohio's 14 211 call centers. That \$2 million would match Ohio United Ways' philanthropic investment in 211. United Ways operate five 211 centers; other nonprofit organizations and a public library run the others.

OHIO'S 211 PROVIDERS

Area Agency on Aging 3	Lifeline, Inc.
Ashtabula County Community Action Agency	Pathways of Central Ohio
Fairfield County 211	United Way of Greater Cincinnati
Mansfield Richland County Public Library	United Way of Greater Cleveland
Lutheran Social Services 211 Central Ohio	United Way of Greater Dayton Area
Help Network of Northeast Ohio	United Way of Summit & Medina
Helpline of Delaware Morrow County	United Way of Greater Toledo

By dialing 211, Ohio residents can speak with community resource specialists who match the callers' needs with thousands of available local resources. No matter the situation, the specialists at 211 listen, identify underlying problems and connect people in need with community resources and services that improve their lives.

The free, confidential service assists people before, during, and after disasters and with basic needs such as housing, food, and employment support.

State of Ohio funding matches United Ways' investment would allow the Ohio 211 network to address workforce shortages, make the social services ecosystem more efficient, defray increased operating costs and facilitate more complex care coordination.

Ohio 211s currently are funded by charitable or local dollars or a combination of both. Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania all provide state funding for 211, and Ohio is one of just a few states nationally that do not make a public investment in the 211 service.

211 provides expert, caring help 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Your partnership is needed to sustain this service.

Thank you for taking the time to hear from us today.