



VT 211 Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health & Welfare

February 11, 2026

Good morning, for the record I am Alison Lamagna, Executive Director of United Ways of VT and VT 211.

Today is 211 Day, an annual observance celebrating the three-digit resource that helps millions of people across North America connect to help. In Vermont, VT 211 provides free, statewide access to community resources by phone, text, and a 24/7 searchable online database.

VT 211's mission is to promote the health and well-being of all Vermonters through a statewide information and referral system that streamlines access to community resources. We are a nationally accredited information and referral service and serve as the centralized, trusted source of health and human service information for the state.

VT 211 is the front door to Vermont's health and human services system, providing confidential, nonjudgmental, and barrier-free support, including interpretation services for callers who speak languages other than English. We are also an integral partner in disaster response and recovery, supporting communities during Tropical Storm Irene, COVID-19, and the flooding events of 2023 and 2024.

Today, our database includes over 11,900 services. In 2025 alone, VT 211 responded to more than 61,000 contacts and made over 22,000 referrals, most often for housing, utilities support, tax preparation, public assistance, and individual and family supports. We also connect veterans, people with disabilities, and older adults with services.

Across Vermont, people are told to call 211 in times of need. Demand is rising as federal changes and cuts ripple through our communities, and more people find themselves in need of help, many for the first time. VT 211 is critical state infrastructure, and the place Vermonters will turn to. We are expected to absorb increased demand, adapt quickly to changing policies and housing rules, activate during disasters, and consistently deliver accurate, real-time information statewide.

The Governor's proposed FY 27 budget reduces our funding by \$332,000. VT 211 needs sustainable, level funding of **\$1,638,029 in FY27**, consistent with FY26. We are not asking for an increase as we are responsibly reducing costs and increasing services to ensure we are responsive during the highest call volume times. Recognizing that time is limited today,



I look forward to talking with you more about this and other initiatives we are involved in to support Vermont communities during your committee's budget conversations.