

Dear Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Bill SB 2145. My name is Jennifer Illich, and I am the Executive Director of FirstLink. FirstLink serves a critical role in our community by answering the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and the 211 Information and Referral Helpline. Every day, our team answers calls, texts, and chats, helping individuals in crisis develop safety plans to prevent suicide and save lives.

The passage of **SB 2145** is vital to ensuring that the team members who staff the 988 and 211 lines are granted immunity when performing their essential, life-saving work. FirstLink adheres to the **highest standards of practice**, following best practices and procedures set forth by our two national accreditations: the **American Association of Suicidology (AAS)** and **InformUSA**.

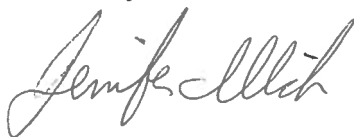
Additionally, we strictly comply with **research-based standards** outlined in the Network Agreement, developed in collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (**SAMHSA**) and **Vibrant Emotional Health**. These guidelines ensure that our team operates with professionalism, compassion, and care while maintaining the trust and safety of those we serve.

Providing immunity for the work performed on these helplines is critical to sustaining the confidence and resilience of the individuals who dedicate themselves to this important mission. It not only protects the workers who are saving lives daily but also reinforces the integrity and reliability of the services we provide.

I urge you to support SB 2145 and ensure that FirstLink and other organizations like ours can continue to provide these indispensable services to our communities.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to addressing this urgent matter. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional information if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Illich".

Jennifer Illich

Executive Director, FirstLink