



Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Cindy Miller, and I have been the Executive Director at FirstLink for over 13 years. Today, one of the greatest needs we have in the state is knowing where to go for help and hope to assist those who need behavioral health support. I am writing about HB 1486. I am neutral about this bill.

We need to make getting help easier- this year has been tough enough, why are we making it even more difficult to get help? HB 1486 will make it harder to find those who need immediate help. The bill also states, "Medical emergency that **has** occurred." Is a behavioral health/suicidal plan a medical emergency? How about an abduction? Many who call our line have not already attempted suicide but have a plan-so it has not "occurred" yet. But they need immediate help.

Our contacts increased almost 19% in 2020 from a record 60,148 in 2019 to a new record 71,325 in 2020. Crisis intervention contacts were 7,938 in 2020 and contacts related to suicide in 2020 were 12,873. People need help and we need to know where Law Enforcement can find them.

Life has thrown a lot at our state this past year. We have been here 24 hours a day for 50 years... no closures because of storms, floods, Covid-19. We are always here because crisis does not stop at certain times or days of the week. But we need Law Enforcement to be able to do the next step and be able to find those who need help. Our staff are devastated when some LE centers across the state do not have technology to "ping" someone who needs help immediately. If it were your loved one, wouldn't you want them to get help immediately wherever they are?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy Miller". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Cindy Miller

FirstLink Executive Director



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**Dial 2-1-1 or
text 898-211**