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## Health Care & Wellness Committee

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### HB 2408

**Brief Description:** Concerning methods of communication used by the technology platform designed for the behavioral health crisis response and suicide prevention system.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lekanoff, Orwall, Davis, Ramel and Nance.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the crisis call center system platform used by designated 988 contact hubs to be capable of allowing any crisis line dedicated to the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native persons to receive crisis assistance requests through phone calls, texts, and chats to the same extent that those capacities are available for the 988 crisis hotline.

**Hearing Date:** 1/23/24

**Staff:** Kim Weidenaar (786-7120).

#### Background:

In 2021 House Bill 1477 was enacted which established several changes to the behavioral health crisis system in response to the adoption of 988 as the phone number for the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline. The bill established crisis call center hubs (subsequently renamed to designated 988 contact hubs) and further defined as a contact center that streamlines clinical interventions and access to resources for people experiencing a behavioral health crisis to provide crisis intervention services, case management, referrals, and connection to crisis system participants. The bill also charged the state with developing a new technology platform for managing communications with the 988 hotline and imposed a tax upon phone lines to support the activities.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Washington's Native and Strong Lifeline is a program operated through the Volunteers of America Western Washington, one of the state's three 988 crisis centers that is dedicated to serving American Indian and Alaska Native people. The Native and Strong Lifeline is integrated into the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline system. When someone calls the 988 Lifeline from a Washington state area code, they will hear an automated greeting that features different options, callers can then choose option 4 to be connected to the Native and Strong Lifeline. Calls to the Native and Strong Lifeline are answered by Native crisis counselors, who are fully trained in crisis intervention and support, with special emphasis on cultural and traditional practices related to healing.

**Summary of Bill:**

The crisis call center system platform used by designated 988 contact hubs must be capable of allowing any crisis line dedicated to the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native persons to receive crisis assistance requests through phone calls, texts, chats, and other similar methods of communication to the same extent that those capacities are available for the 988 crisis hotline.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 17, 2024.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.