

Date of Hearing: May 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
 Buffy Wicks, Chair
 AB 2093 (Bauer-Kahan) – As Amended March 26, 2026

Policy Committee:	Health	Vote: 16 - 0
	Communications and Conveyance	9 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill extends the date on which the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) is authorized to disband the 988 advisory group, from January 1, 2025, to January 1, 2030, and requires the advisory group to meet once per quarter until December 31, 2029.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor and absorbable costs to CalHHS to continue convening the 988 advisory group.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** This bill is sponsored by the Steinberg Institute. According to the author:

AB 988 passed with broad bipartisan support because all communities struggle to assist people in mental health crisis. It is imperative that the 988 system achieves its original goals of interoperability and teamwork across the departments tasked with 988 implementation. Continued assistance and oversight are key to making success a reality. The failure of this program is not an option- the lives of Californians depend on it.

2) **Background.** The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 (NSHD) designated 9-8-8 as the new three-digit number for the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. The NSHD also authorized states to impose a fee on telephone users to fund the 9-8-8 hotlines within the states. Federally, the 988 system is administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which operates the backbone of the 988 system through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network.

In California, AB 988 (Bauer-Kahan), Chapter 747, Statute of 2022, established and implemented the statutory structure for California’s 988 systems and state 988 centers, in compliance with the federal requirements. OES administers the 988 Fund and calculates the surcharge rate and communicates the surcharge requirement to California Department of Tax and Fee Administration by October 1st each year. The surcharge is then assessed on end-user access lines, such as a cellphone or home phone lines.

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