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**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FROM OREGON PARTNERSHIP\*\*\***

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**ECONOMY TO BLAME FOR RECORD INCREASE IN CALLS TO OREGON  
PARTNERSHIP'S SUICIDE PREVENTION LINE**

(Portland, Oregon) Oregon Partnership's suicide prevention line, LifeLine, is reflecting the souring economy with a 55% increase in phone calls from people in crisis and contemplating suicide.

The number of calls received by staff and volunteers on the suicide prevention line reached 1,270 in the month of September. That's 454 more calls from people seeking help than the month before.

And with nine days remaining in October, the number of calls this month has already reached 955 and on track to surpass September's total.

In September, Oregon Partnership began taking LifeLine calls originating from Washington, Idaho, and Alaska to act as a backup for suicide prevention lines in those states.

"We've been asked to serve as a resource for other Northwest states where it is obvious that more people are feeling a sense of hopelessness as a result of losing their job or experiencing a personal financial crisis," said Leslie Storm, Director of Oregon Partnership's Crisis Lines Program. "And when so many of these folks are already facing serious alcohol and drug programs, it's a double whammy."

Storm notes that during the last couple of months, more callers have been mentioning job and money issues.

"It's also interesting to note that we've been getting more calls from men on all our crisis lines," said Storm. "In September, we received 951 calls from men, compared to 594 in August. This is an unusual increase."

OP's Suicide Prevention Line (1-800-273-TALK) is the state's only suicide crisis hotline certified by the American Association of Suicidology and is part of the National LifeLine Network.

Oregon Partnership's HelpLine (1-800-923-HELP) provides crisis intervention, including confidential alcohol and drug crisis counseling and treatment referral.

Operated by experienced staff and approximately 75 volunteers who undergo 56 hours of crisis line skills training, the four lines – including The YouthLine and Linea de Ayuda - are the lifeblood for those in crisis and feel they have nowhere else to turn.

Oregon Partnership's crisis lines have been offering intervention and treatment referral to an increasing number of callers. For this past fiscal year, more than 25-thousand people received immediate assistance from this efficient and cost effective operation.