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To Mr. Bill Wesley:

The Kentucky Emergency Number Association (KENA) representing 911 professionals across the Commonwealth of Kentucky want to express our full support of legislation BR169 being introduced by Representative Wesley.

This critical legislation will provide resources and training for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and work-induced stress during each in-service training provided by Kentucky Law Enforcement Council for all telecommunicators. This will also give access to the Law Enforcement Professional Development and Wellness Program to Kentucky telecommunicators.

There is no doubt that telecommunicators/911 professionals not only in Kentucky, but across the United States experience a great amount of job-related stress. We are the calm voice in the dark that citizens and other first responders rely on during their worst days. We must listen to a mother's cries when her baby is not breathing, we must listen to a suicidal caller with a gun to their head - hoping responders arrive before we hear the shot ring through the phone, we must listen to our responders call for help when they have been attacked in the field, we must take calls from our own family and friends when all we can do is send help and assure them everything is going to be okay.

We return to our post every shift not knowing what that shift will bring our way even though we probably haven't even processed what happened during our previous shift. We must answer that next call even after we have just handled a horribly tragic call because the calls do not stop for us to take even just a moment.

We are urging our telecommunicators/911 professionals to be responsible for their mental health and we need to give them the tools to do so. This is long overdue and we must take care of our first of the first responders.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Gwynne  
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