

A RESOLUTION to recognize February 3, 2016, as Suicide Prevention Day.

WHEREAS, suicide is the second leading cause of death in Kentucky among young people ages 15 to 34 and the fourth leading cause of death in Kentucky among people ages 35 to 54, and the rate of suicide for older adults in the Commonwealth is disproportionately high compared with younger age groups and is higher than the national average; and

WHEREAS, in the past decade, an average of 600 Kentuckians have died by suicide each year and an estimated 3,000 Kentuckians attempt suicide annually. In the state, people dying by suicide each year outnumber homicide deaths three to one; and

WHEREAS, as many as one-third of the citizens of the Commonwealth suffer devastating and long-lasting emotional trauma when a family member, friend, coworker, neighbor, or classmate dies as a result of suicide; and

WHEREAS, suicide is a major public health issue that can be reduced when initiatives dedicated to the prevention of suicide, the promotion of effective treatment for persons at risk, and the support of persons who have lost a loved one to suicide are encouraged; and

WHEREAS, suicide is often the result of untreated mental illness, especially depressive disorders, and research indicates that many suicides would have been prevented with immediate and appropriate intervention and treatment. Research also demonstrates that increased public awareness of the warning signs of suicide and awareness of appropriate and effective intervention strategies reduce suicide deaths; and

WHEREAS, over 200 volunteers across the state have been trained as suicide prevention gatekeeper trainers to teach family, friends, and all citizens in the Commonwealth how to help save the life of someone in a mental health crisis; and

WHEREAS, Louisville is the first major city in the United States to establish and implement a community-wide suicide prevention plan, as part of the Metro Louisville Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Blueprint; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, Kentucky joined Washington state to become the second state to pass a law requiring training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management for mental health professionals. In March of 2014, Washington expanded its law to require the training of healthcare professionals; and

WHEREAS, every year in Kentucky, it is estimated that over 2,000 individuals who attempted suicide are treated in emergency rooms or admitted to hospitals for treatment. Healthcare settings like this represent a critical juncture in which persons with suicidal thoughts or ideation could be cared for by professionals with training specifically regarding suicide prevention; and

WHEREAS, suicide prevention opportunities continue to increase due to advances in clinical research pertaining to the diagnosis and effective treatment of mental illness, advances in neuroscience, and in the development of community-based suicide prevention initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the training of healthcare professionals in suicide assessment, treatment, and management would be effective, valuable, and life-saving for the citizens of the Commonwealth;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The Senate recognizes February 3, 2016, as Suicide Prevention Day.

➔Section 2. The members of the Senate encourage Suicide Prevention Consortium Kentucky (SPCK), Louisville Chapter, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Kentucky Suicide Prevention Group, Owensboro Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition, Tri-state Suicide Prevention Coalition, Make A Difference for Kids, One Love Louisville Suicide Prevention Group, and all citizens of the Commonwealth to continue the work they each do in saving the lives of citizens of the Commonwealth through suicide prevention awareness and education.

➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Senator Dan Seum for presentation to participants on the day of the event.