

ENGROSSED HOUSE  
JOINT  
RESOLUTION NO. 1018

By: Greenwood, Staggs, Askins,  
Winchester and Dank of the  
House

and

Haney of the Senate

A Joint Resolution creating the Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force; stating purpose; providing for membership, appointments, officer, staff meetings, nonreimbursement, and duties; requiring a final report; and providing for noncodification.

WHEREAS, latest national statistics for 1995 indicate that Oklahoma is tied for 10th place with a suicide rate of 15.3 for all ages; and

WHEREAS, a study of suicide in the 50 largest U.S. metropolitan areas ranks Oklahoma City in 8th place with a suicide rate of 14.8 for the three-year period from 1990 to 1992; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the second and third leading cause of injury deaths among persons 15 to 64 years of age in Oklahoma (1990-1994). For 1995, suicide is the third leading cause of death claiming 512 lives, including 110 youth; and

WHEREAS, in the ten-year period from 1986 to 1995 there have been 883 youths under age 25 that died from suicide in Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, suicide is a complex and multifaceted biological, sociological, psychological and societal problem; and

WHEREAS, many suicides are preventable if persons at risk of suicidal behavior can be identified and provided appropriate help; and

WHEREAS, each suicide intimately affects at least six other people, including family members and friends of a loved one who died by suicide; and

WHEREAS, suicide deaths impose a huge unrecognized and unmeasured economic burden on the State of Oklahoma in terms of potential years of life lost, medical costs incurred and work time lost by mourners. A United States study showed each youth suicide resulted in an average loss of 53 years of life and \$432,000.00 of economic productivity.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 47TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created until November 1, 2000, the Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force. The purpose of this Task Force is to study the problem of youth suicide and develop a comprehensive state plan for reducing the suicide rate in Oklahoma.

The Task Force shall be appointed by the Commissioner of Health and consist of representatives from state agencies, teachers, school counselors, PTA members, Native American community representatives, drug and alcohol treatment professionals, survivors of suicide which would include but not be limited to family members or loved ones of someone who died by suicide, and suicide prevention organization representatives. The Task Force shall include the following members:

1. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, or designee;
2. The State Commissioner of Health, or designee;
3. The Director of Mental Health, or designee;
4. The Director of the Department of Human Services, or designee;
5. The Director of the Office of Juvenile Affairs, or designee;
6. One member of the clergy to be appointed by the Governor;

7. At least three members appointed by the Governor who are licensed psychologists, or mental health professionals who work in suicide prevention;

8. At least three members of the Oklahoma House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives;

9. At least three members of the Oklahoma Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate; and

10. At least three members appointed by the Governor who are members of private local community mental health programs or suicide prevention programs.

The Task Force shall meet at least monthly at the call of the Chair. The Chair shall be the Commissioner of Health. The Commissioner shall provide a meeting room, staff and all other necessities for the success of the study. The members shall receive no reimbursement.

B. The Task Force shall study and develop a comprehensive plan for suicide prevention, intervention and postvention.

The Task Force shall file a report with the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate on or before October 31, 2000, with its findings and recommendations from the study.

Passed the House of Representatives the 8th day of March, 1999.

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Speaker of the House of  
Representatives

Passed the Senate the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1999.

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President of the Senate