

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE BILL 718

Short Title: Suicide Prevention Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Gillespie, Alexander (Primary Sponsors); Faison, Glazier, Harrison, Hilton, Insko, Wainwright, Weiss, and Wray.

Referred to: Appropriations.

March 15, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT AN AWARENESS
PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE.

Whereas, youth suicide is a major public health problem; and

Whereas, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data showed an increase in suicide mortality for youth under age 20; and

Whereas, in 2004, the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, released its report, Saving Tomorrows Today: North Carolina's Plan to Prevent Youth Suicide; and

Whereas, the Department's report proposed strategies for preventing youth suicide; and

Whereas, one of the objectives of the Department's report is to launch a statewide public awareness campaign with components that focus on the general public and decision-makers, and incorporate targeted messages for special at-risk youth populations, and to provide information resources to community groups for promoting awareness through existing channels of communication and for local awareness campaigns; and

Whereas, the United States Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration announced in 2006 the awarding of \$26,000,000 to 46 grantees, some of them state governments, for the purpose of preventing adolescent and teen suicide;

Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services shall appoint and convene an advisory committee to review North Carolina's Plan to Prevent Youth Suicide (Plan). Members of the advisory committee may include representatives of the Division of Public Health, the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services, the Department of Public Instruction, local health departments, public school officials, child and family support

1 teams, the Council of Community Programs, and others designated by the Secretary.
2 The purpose of the advisory committee shall be to identify goals and objectives of the
3 Plan that are most likely to be effective in preventing youth suicide, and make
4 recommendations to the Secretary, the Governor, and the General Assembly, on
5 strategies that should be developed and the resources needed to achieve the goals. In
6 addition to strategies proposed in the Plan, the advisory committee is encouraged to
7 propose additional initiatives to address youth suicide in North Carolina. The advisory
8 committee shall explore the efficacy of a hotline to respond to inquiries about youth
9 suicide and shall include the cost to the State of implementing a hotline. The advisory
10 committee shall report its progress to the Secretary, the Governor, and the General
11 Assembly on or before May 1, 2008, and shall issue a final report on or before January
12 1, 2009.

13 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
14 Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary, the sum of fifteen
15 thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the 2007-2008 fiscal year and the sum of fifteen
16 thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. These funds shall be used to
17 implement an outreach program to make local health departments, local education
18 agencies, local management entities for mental health, developmental disabilities, and
19 substance abuse services, and other community entities across the State aware of the
20 incidence of youth suicide, and publicize information to inform youth and adults on the
21 resources available for obtaining the help necessary to prevent suicide. Publicity efforts
22 shall include the development and distribution of a poster and the development of a
23 Web site to reach the largest number of youth in this State. The Department shall
24 explore and apply for federal funds available to prevent youth suicide to supplement
25 State funds appropriated for this purpose.

26 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007.