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In favor of CSHB 1386: by Representative Garnet F. Coleman & Senator Rodney Ellis
 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT relating to the public health threat presented by youth suicide

I am testifying in favor of CSHB 1386 by Representative Coleman and Senator Ellis both for myself and my husband as survivors of the death of a teenage son to suicide and for the Texas Suicide Prevention Council which has 20 local suicide prevention coalitions throughout the state. I am also turning in a letter of support from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention which was sent earlier.

The Problem of Teenage Suicide is Real in Texas

- Death by suicide is the 3rd leading killer of all youth ages 15-25 and the 2nd leading killer of young men.
- Close to 18 percent of high school females and 10 percent of high school males self-reported seriously considering a suicide attempt in 2009; and 10 percent of females and 4 percent of high school males self reported an attempted suicide in past 12 months according to Youth Risk Behavior Survey for Texas.
- 90% of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental health condition and recent research cited from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center indicates that bullying can be one of the risk factors for death by suicide.

This bill would enable school districts to have a best practice based list of mental health intervention and suicide prevention programs for implementation in public junior, middle and high schools.

CSHB 1386 Provides a Means to Address This Need With No Cost and Local Control

- The committee substitute would have no fiscal notes since the list would be based on existing best practice programs and could be updated as available
- The committee substitute also would enable local control to meet local needs since each school district could select from the list a program or programs appropriate for implementation in their district.
- Also, please note that Ch 38, TX Education Code, (Sec. 38.016) which deals with Health & Safety at schools, already preserves parental rights and bars schools or school employees from suggesting any particular diagnosis or treatment or medication for school children.

In summary, this bill addresses a real need and will help save lives and has no fiscal notes and does not interfere with parental rights. I ask you to support this bill in memory of the more than 1800 youth who died by suicide in TX in the last 5 years for which we have data.

Suicide Death Statistics for the State of Texas for Youth for 2004-2008 (rate = number of deaths per 100,000 population)

Age	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2004-2008	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
5 to 14	20	0.6	22	0.7	23	0.7	11	0.3	13	0.4	89	0.5
15 to 24	335	9.7	366	10.4	344	9.5	356	9.7	337	9.1	1,738	9.7

A program of Mental Health America of Texas and the Texas Suicide Prevention Council

For Texas suicide prevention information and resources, visit
www.TexasSuicidePrevention.org

If you or someone you know needs help, call the
Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Red Nacional para la Prevención de Suicidio En Español: 1-888-628-9454



Ask a question, save a life.

Question the person about suicide.
Do they have thoughts? Feelings?
Plans? Don't be afraid to ask.

Persuade the person to get help.
Listen carefully. Then say, "Let me
help." Or, "Come with me to find
help."

Refer for help. Contact a parent or
any adult who can help such as
school personnel, a counselor,
social worker, or psychologist,
physician, clergy, coach, or any
other adult you trust.

To Save A Life...

- ♦ Realize someone might be suicidal.
- ♦ Reach out. Asking the suicide question DOES NOT increase risk.
- ♦ Listen. Talking things out can save a life.
- ♦ Don't try to do everything yourself. Get others involved.
- ♦ Don't promise secrecy and don't worry about being disloyal.
- ♦ If persuasion fails, call your mental health center, local hotline or emergency services.

Warning Signs of Suicide

- ♦ Suicide threats
- ♦ Previous suicide attempts
- ♦ Alcohol and drug abuse
- ♦ Statements revealing a desire to die
- ♦ Sudden changes in behavior
- ♦ Prolonged depression
- ♦ Making final arrangements
- ♦ Giving away prized possessions
- ♦ Purchasing a gun or stockpiling pills

www.TexasSuicidePrevention.org

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