

MINUTES  
**SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 27, 2018

**TIME:** 3:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW54

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Heider, Vice Chairman Souza, Senators Martin, Lee, Agenbroad, Foreman, Potts, and Jordan

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Harris

**NOTE:** The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

**CONVENED:** **Chairman Heider** called the meeting of the Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 3:10 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** **Vice Chairman Souza** moved to approve the Minutes of February 7, 2018. **Senator Martin** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**Senator Martin** moved to approve the Minutes of February 8, 2018. **Vice Chairman Souza** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**Senator Agenbroad** moved to approve the Minutes of February 12, 2018. **Senator Potts** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**HCR 046** **Board of Dentistry Rule Rejection.** **Representative Packer** stated that this resolution rejects **Docket No. 19-0101-1701**. The Idaho State Board of Dentistry (BOD) requested that the Committee reject the rule because it needed to be corrected.

**DISCUSSION:** **Chairman Heider** asked what rules the BOD would follow when the rules are rejected. **Representative Packer** stated the current rules are still in place. This resolution would reject a proposed rule which the BOD needed to correct.

**MOTION:** There being no more testimony or questions, **Vice Chairman Souza** moved to send **HCR 046** to the floor with a **do pass** recommendation. **Senator Martin** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Vice Chairman Souza will carry the resolution on the floor of the Senate.

**PRESENTATION: Suicide Prevention.** **Shannon Decker** introduced herself as the Executive Director and Cofounder of the Idaho Suicide Prevention Coalition (ISPC). **Ms. Decker** stated ISPC formed in 2015 and helped relaunch the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for Idahoans aged 15 to 34. Thirty-five percent of Idaho's public and charter school students report feeling sad or hopeless, 21.7 percent report thoughts of suicide, 18.4 percent have had a suicide plan, 9.7 percent reported attempting suicide, and 3.2 percent have received medical care for a suicide attempt. In Idaho, suicide rates are 12 times higher than homicide rates. In 2010, the calculated value of the loss of work and medical care caused by suicide was \$330 million. **Ms. Decker** asserted the State's suicide prevention program costs less than \$1 million per year; therefore, if the program saves one life, the savings outweigh the cost.

In 2017, Idaho lost 20 youth and 46 young adults to suicide. A school resource officer in Glenn's Ferry responded to 12 serious suicide threats in the previous four

weeks. **Ms. Decker** stated one of the best ways to prevent suicide is to recognize and treat underlying mental health conditions. She emphasized schools' role in identifying students who show signs of mental health conditions or suicide risk. **Ms. Decker** noted ISPC has developed a bill called the Jason Flatt Act, which would provide suicide gatekeeper training for school employees. Individuals in such training learn warning signs, risk factors, how to approach someone who is suicidal, and how to refer suicidal individuals to the appropriate resources.

ISPC created a platform to provide information about suicide prevention trainings throughout the State. **Ms. Decker** described various types of trainings offered in Idaho. She stated ISPC plans to create working committees comprised of various stakeholder groups. The committees will engage in coordinated suicide prevention efforts. ISPC also held a "Zero Suicide Conference" in Boise in 2017. The conference will be held in Boise again in 2018.

**Ms. Decker** shared ISPC's goals, which include lowering Idaho's suicide rate 10 percent by 2020 and engaging in more collaborative efforts with stakeholders and other suicide prevention groups. She noted collaboration and communication can prevent duplicative work.

**DISCUSSION:** **Chairman Heider** inquired as to how often the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline is utilized. **Ms. Decker** stated she did not have the statistics on-hand, but would later forward them to the Committee.

**Chairman Heider** asked why there is an increase in suicides in springtime. **Ms. Decker** explained that suicide planning requires energy and people often have more energy in the spring.

**Vice Chairman Souza** asked if research shows any correlation between medication for mental health conditions and attempted suicides. **Ms. Decker** confirmed that side effects of certain medications can be a contributing factors for suicide. **Vice Chairman Souza** asked if ISPC tracks the number of hotline callers who take medication. **Ms. Decker** asserted it is difficult to collect data using the hotline. When an individual calls the hotline, the hotline worker's main focus is assisting the caller. Collecting data during such calls is not a priority. ISPC can screen phone numbers in order to obtain geographical data; however, the data is often unreliable. **Ms. Decker** noted that questions regarding medication are used to assess an individual's level of suicide risk. **Vice Chairman Souza** suggested that ISPC gather data regarding medication use during follow-up services.

**Senator Agenbroad** asked Ms. Decker to describe several ways in which the State and ISPC work together successfully. He also asked what she would like to change about the way in which the State and ISPC interact. **Ms. Decker** asserted the State and ISPC successfully collaborated on the development of the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline, youth suicide prevention efforts, and the creation of public service announcements. She commented the State and ISPC could improve communication, create a five-year plan, establish a Statewide model for suicide prevention, and develop a stronger call to action.

**Senator Lee** asked if ISPC is responsible for Idaho's Suicide Prevention Plan. **Ms. Decker** clarified the Governor's Council for Suicide Prevention is responsible for the plan. She noted the president of ISPC is on the council.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business, **Chairman Heider** adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

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Senator Heider  
Chair

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Rachel Goodman  
Secretary