

Mister Chairman, Senators, thank you for allowing me the ability to speak this afternoon.

My name is Jace Woods. I am a Freshman at Meridian High, and I stand in firm affirmation to House Bill 860.

While I do not like to talk about it, I have been hung up on by the National Suicide Line because of 1329. And I am not alone. I would like to share with you all a story from one of my greatest friends. He was 14 at this time. He told me, "It was one in the morning. I couldn't sleep. That week was the worst week of my life. I lost all my friends, and my family was busy with other things. I was so, so alone. I was staring at my gun, trying to think of one reason not to end it all right there. Then I decided to call 988. The phone rang. A woman picked up. She was kind - for a minute, I actually smiled. But when I told her I was fourteen, she said that unless my parents gave permission, she was required by law to hang up. It was one in the morning, and I couldn't tell my parents I wanted to die. So she hung up. I still don't know why I didn't pull the trigger."

Here in Idaho, we rank **41st in the nation** for teen mental health. In our state alone, an estimated **170 minors died by suicide in 2025**. I know 3 of them.

And If even one of those kids were hung up on, because the suicide hotline is required by law to start winding down the call if the child is not deemed in immediate danger, and committed suicide, **this bill as**

currently written is directly responsible for a child's death.

Because when someone is in that kind of pain, asking for help is the hardest thing a person can do.

Because of this, I have gathered a petition of people who want this changed with over 300 names. Nearly half of those are students, many of whom were affected by 1329. I beg of you, do not let their pleas fall on deaf ears.

House bill 860 absolutely must pass this committee. Because every day that this bill goes unclarified, another child may not get the help they need.