

## **Senate Resolution No. 13**

**Introduced by Senator Ortiz**

Relative to Suicide Prevention Week

WHEREAS, Nine persons die of suicide in California every day, or over 3,200 per year; and

WHEREAS, An additional 75,000 to 100,000 Californians attempt suicide each year; and

WHEREAS, Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States, exceeding deaths by homicide; and

WHEREAS, Suicide is the third leading cause of death in the United States among youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years; and

WHEREAS, The rate of suicide for youths aged 10 to 14 years increased 100 percent between 1980 and 1996; and

WHEREAS, The rate of suicide in the United States for older adults is also disproportionately high, and adults over the age of 75 years have a suicide rate that is twice the rate of other age groups; and

WHEREAS, In at least two counties in California, suicide is now the leading cause of nonnatural deaths, exceeding deaths by vehicle accidents, drowning, and other nonnatural causes; and

WHEREAS, At the very minimum, an average of six persons, or over 19,000 persons in California annually, suffer devastating and long-lasting emotional trauma when a family member or friend dies as a result of a suicide; and

WHEREAS, The causes of suicide are complex and multifaceted, involving psychological, biological, and sociological factors; and

WHEREAS, Suicide is often the result of untreated mental illness and research indicates that many suicides are preventable with immediate and appropriate intervention; and

WHEREAS, Suicide attempts and completions impose, in addition to tremendous loss and economic loss to families and friends, a large unrecognized social and economic loss on the State of California and local communities through medical, law enforcement, and emergency personnel costs as well as lost economic and social contributions; and

WHEREAS, Research indicates that each suicide results in an estimated \$397,000 in lost earnings, and each suicide attempt results in costs of a least \$33,000 in hospitalization, permanent disability, and lost earnings; and



WHEREAS, Suicide prevention opportunities continue to increase due to advances in clinical research pertaining to the diagnosis and effective treatment of mental illness, along with advances in neuroscience and in the development of community-based suicide prevention initiatives; and

WHEREAS, Additional research is also needed to determine the interaction of multiple-risk factors and to develop more effective intervention strategies, especially for different age, gender, ethnic, and cultural groups; and

WHEREAS, The United States Surgeon General has issued to the states a “Call to Action to Prevent Suicide” to encourage states to adopt suicide prevention strategies based on a public health model; and

WHEREAS, More can be done to reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for emotional or mental health problems, as well as for seeking help for suicidal thoughts and behavior; and

WHEREAS, Research demonstrates that increased public awareness of warning signs of suicide, and awareness of appropriate and effective intervention strategies, would reduce suicide deaths; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Members hereby proclaim May 6 through May 13, 2001, as Suicide Prevention Week; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Members declare all of the following:*

(1) Suicide is a major public health problem that can be reduced with effective actions.

(2) Suicide prevention is a state priority and local communities are encouraged to also declare suicide prevention a priority.

(3) Initiatives should be encouraged that are dedicated to the prevention of suicide, to the promotion of effective treatment for persons at risk, and to the support of persons who have lost a loved one to suicide.

(4) Development of accessible and affordable mental health treatment to enable persons at risk of suicide to obtain these services without fear of any stigma are encouraged.

(5) Citizens are encouraged to join in recognizing suicide prevention week and in promoting suicide prevention activities; and be it further

*Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.*



Senate Resolution No. 13 read and adopted by the Senate May 3, 2001.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Senate

