

1 H.481

2 An act relating to public health initiatives to address death by suicide

3 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

4 Sec. 1. 18 V.S.A. chapter 192 is added to read:

5 CHAPTER 192. PREVENTING DEATH BY SUICIDE

6 § 8151. DIRECTOR OF SUICIDE PREVENTION; DUTIES

7 The Department of Mental Health's Director of Suicide Prevention shall
8 lead the State's suicide prevention efforts, intervention supports, and
9 postvention efforts and collaborate with communities and providers to reduce
10 the number of suicide deaths and attempts in the State. The Director shall
11 promote and support statewide crisis and suicide prevention recommendations
12 as outlined in the State's Suicide Platform, including the creation of a strategic
13 plan and suicide prevention education protocol for all schools. The Director
14 shall:

15 (1) expand partnerships, including with service members, veterans, and
16 their families;

17 (2) implement innovative data-driven initiatives;

18 (3) coordinate suicide prevention programs across the State; and

19 (4) work to secure federal funding.

1 Sec. 2. STATEWIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION; STRATEGIC PLAN AND
2 SCHOOL PROTOCOL

3 (a)(1) On or before July 1, 2024, the Director of Suicide Prevention, in
4 collaboration with the Agency of Human Services and stakeholders, shall
5 develop and submit a statewide strategic plan pertaining to suicide prevention
6 services, training, education, and postvention services to the House Committee
7 on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare. The
8 statewide strategic plan shall identify goals, possible partners, and strategies
9 for meeting clearly defined targets in the prevention of suicide. The plan shall
10 consider emerging research on factors contributing to suicide. Key resources
11 and gaps shall be identified, including sustainable 988 lifeline funding, zero
12 suicide program expansion, improved data collection and reporting to identify
13 contributing causes, including social factors, to inform prevention strategies,
14 and data-informed systems and strategies for establishing and maintaining
15 postvention services within communities, schools, afterschool programs, and
16 health care systems.

17 (2) Prior to the submission of the strategic plan required pursuant to
18 subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Director of Suicide Prevention shall
19 submit quarterly progress updates on the development of the strategic plan to
20 the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on Health
21 and Welfare between July 1, 2023 and April 1, 2024. In the January 2024

1 progress update, the Director of Suicide Prevention shall include preliminary
2 budget recommendations and a sustainable funding plan for the 988 lifeline.

3 (b) On or before January 15, 2024, the Director of Suicide Prevention, in
4 collaboration with the Agency of Education and stakeholders, shall develop
5 and submit a model protocol for all schools regarding suicide prevention,
6 education, and postvention services to the House Committee on Health Care
7 and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare. The model protocol
8 shall:

9 (1) reflect preliminary data related to grants to expand mental health and
10 well-being services to youth pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 112, Sec.
11 3; and

12 (2) ensure that school employees receive education pertaining to the
13 prevention of, use of language regarding, and identification of eating disorders
14 in youth.

15 Sec. 3. SUICIDE PREVENTION; HEALTH CARE FACILITIES; MODEL
16 PROTOCOL

17 On or before July 1, 2024, the Director of Suicide Prevention, in
18 collaboration with the Agency of Human Services, medical and professional
19 boards, and stakeholders, shall develop and submit a model protocol to the
20 House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on Health and
21 Welfare for health care facilities regarding suicide prevention and postvention

1 services. This model protocol shall consider the recommendations of the
2 report required pursuant to 2022 Acts and Resolves No. 115, Sec. 13.

3 Sec. 4. PRESENTATION; COMPREHENSIVE SUICIDE PREVENTION

4 GRANT

5 (a) On or before February 1, 2024, the Department of Health, in
6 collaboration with the Director of Suicide Prevention, shall present information
7 to the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on
8 Health and Welfare regarding the work accomplished by the State in
9 accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
10 Comprehensive Suicide Prevention grant, including the results of the complete
11 Suicide Data Linkage Project.

12 (b) Prior to the presentation required pursuant to subsection (a) of this
13 section, the Department shall submit the results of the complete Suicide Data
14 Linkage Project to the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate
15 Committee on Health and Welfare as soon as they are available.

16 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

17 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.