

2019 HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

HB 1470

2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1470
2/8/2019
32486

☐ Subcommittee
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature Carmen Hart

By: Elaine Stromme

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to family leave for state employees

Minutes:

Attachments: 1-2

Chairman Kasper: opened the hearing on HB 1470.

Rep. Corey Mock: appeared in support. Was going to provide information. End 7:40
(Attachment #1, from Ryan Slapnicka, Rep. Mock shared)

Vice Chair Steiner: So does the definition of a child in-law include a stepchild?

The law intern provided the code to the committee about definition of child. (Attachment #2)

Rep. Mock: Went over the bill.

Rep. Vetter: Is this unpaid leave of absence similar to National Guard? Is this just for state agencies?

Rep. Mock: This would only apply to State employees or employees of higher education, so about 14,000 employees would be covered by this. Current law says a state employee is allowed up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave. With this bill they could take unpaid leave within 6 months of the actual death. They can also use their accrued benefits if they need more time.

Rep. Vetter: Do the employees have to give ample time to employer?

Rep. Mock: Look at subsection 1 and 2 of section 3 you will notice that we currently require that they work with their supervisors to make reasonable accommodations.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Under family leave you can use any of your vacation time that you have accrued, to be paid for a portion of that but otherwise it is unpaid.

Rep. Mock: There are three types of leave; Vacation, sick leave, and FMLA unpaid leave. Use of sick leave and FMLA unpaid leave.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Is your intent to use sick leave for other reasons than for the death of a child?

Rep. Mock: Under current law you can use accrued sick leave for a mother who has a child, there is a specific area in section 2, that you are referring to.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Under FMLA you can take 3 days for a death of a loved one. But I don't think you can take sick leave for a death of a loved one. 19:20

Rep. Mock: Generally, the 3 days of bereavement leave were allowed as an agency policy.

Chairman Kasper: We are not changing anything but just adding the death of the employee's child. 20:54

Rep. Schauer: On page two line A, you struck husband and wife and added two employees married to each other.

Rep. Mock: It is a Legislative Council code reviser.

Chairman Kasper: Isn't that adding Gay marriage?

Rep. Mock: This is to be Consistent with current federal law.

Closed the hearing

2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1470
2/14/2019
32783

- ☐ Subcommittee
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Carmen Hart	By: Elaine Stromme
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Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to family leave for state employees

Minutes:

Attachments:1

Chairman Kasper: Opened the meeting on HB 1470.

Rep. B. Koppelman: Handed out (attachment #1). Remove the overstrike (4:16-4:33) on Section 2, line 8, about (husband and wife) and remove the new language (two people that are married to each other). On page 2 governs sick leave on state employees total sick time that may be taken in one year is 480 hours or 12 weeks. Any time taken for bereavement is limited to 160 hours of leave. On page 3 at the end of the bill I would like to add: shall consider a study of both the annual sick leave and the annual vacation leave system that we have today to determine whether or not a transition to a PTO system where you just have one bank of hours, and use them for whatever you want, vacation or being sick is a practical and desired. Use of the time. With that I move the amendment.

Rep.Rohr: Seconded

Rep. P. Anderson: Is the Bill sponsor okay with these amendments? 10:18

Rep. B. Koppelman: Yes, the bill sponsor is satisfied with the amendments.

Rep. Schneider: This is the recommendation from legislative council generic language. (two people that are married to each other)

Rep. B. Koppelman: We all know that supreme court decisions change from time to time too and if it was to change everything would be reverted back. It should stay the way it is because that is what the people want.

Chairman Kasper: The motion and second for the amendments on the HB1470.

Voice Vote Carries

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

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Page 2

Rep. Hoverson: made a motion to Do Pass as amended HB1470

Rep. Schauer: Seconded

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Yes 13 No 1 Absent 0

Do Pass as amended carries

Rep. B. Koppelman will carry HB1470

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1470

Page 1, line 2, after "employees" insert "; and to provide for a legislative management study of state employee leave policies"

Page 2, line 8, remove the overstrike over "~~a husband and wife~~"

Page 2, line 8, remove "two employees married to each other are"

Page 2, line 28, after "bereavement" insert "is limited to one hundred sixty hours and"

Page 3, after line 19, insert:

"SECTION 4. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - STATE EMPLOYEE LEAVE POLICIES. During the 2019-20 interim, the legislative management shall consider studying the leave policies for state employees. The study shall include the efficacy and desirability of transitioning annual leave and sick leave into a combined paid time off system. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation necessary to implement the recommendations, to the sixty-seventh legislative assembly."

Renumber accordingly

**2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB1470**

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: 19.0036.02001

Recommendation: ☒ Adopt Amendment
☐ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations
☐ Place on Consent Calendar
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ _____

Motion Made By Rep. B. Koppelman Seconded By Rep. Rohr

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Jim Kasper			Rep. Pamela Anderson		
Vice Chair Vicky Steiner			Rep. Mary Schneider		
Rep. Jeff Hoverson					
Rep. Craig Johnson					
Rep. Daniel Johnston					
Rep. Karen Karls					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Vernon Laning					
Rep. Scott Louser					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. Austen Schauer					
Rep. Steve Vetter					

Total (Yes) _____ No _____

Absent _____

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

VOICE VOTE CARRIES

**2019 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB1470**

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: 19.0036.02001

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment
☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation
☒ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations
☐ Place on Consent Calendar
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ _____

Motion Made By Rep. Hoverson Seconded By Rep. Schauer

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Jim Kasper	X		Rep. Pamela Anderson	X	
Vice Chair Vicky Steiner	X		Rep. Mary Schneider	X	
Rep. Jeff Hoverson	X				
Rep. Craig Johnson	X				
Rep. Daniel Johnston	X				
Rep. Karen Karls	X				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	X				
Rep. Vernon Laning		X			
Rep. Scott Louser	X				
Rep. Karen Rohr	X				
Rep. Austen Schauer	X				
Rep. Steve Vetter	X				

Total (Yes) 13 No 1

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Rep. B. Koppelman

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1470: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Rep. Kasper, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 1 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1470 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 2, after "employees" insert "; and to provide for a legislative management study of state employee leave policies"

Page 2, line 8, remove the overstrike over "~~a husband and wife~~"

Page 2, line 8, remove "two employees married to each other are"

Page 2, line 28, after "bereavement" insert "is limited to one hundred sixty hours and"

Page 3, after line 19, insert:

"SECTION 4. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - STATE EMPLOYEE LEAVE POLICIES. During the 2019-20 interim, the legislative management shall consider studying the leave policies for state employees. The study shall include the efficacy and desirability of transitioning annual leave and sick leave into a combined paid time off system. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation necessary to implement the recommendations, to the sixty-seventh legislative assembly."

Renumber accordingly

2019 SENATE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1470

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Sheyenne River Room, State Capitol

HB1470
3/15/2019
#33798

☐ Subcommittee
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk: Pam Dever

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to family leave for state employees; to provide for a legislative management study of state employee leave policies.

Minutes:

Att # 1 – Rep. Mock

Chairman Davison: Let's open HB1470.

Rep. Corey Mock, Dist.18, Grand Forks: I am one of the sponsors. I handed out a letter and other information/ (see att #1) I did not bring prepared testimony. This letter is from Ryan Slapnicka who intended to testify today. The interstate was closed so he could not get her. Rep. Mock read the e-mail. If the committee would like to hear from him, he will come next week if you want to hold this hearing open. He really wants this bill passes so will do whatever he needs to do. Ryan is a law enforcement officer. We have been working on this for two years. This bill deals with public employees only. The House did amend the bill. Section 1 relates to family leave. The FMLA portion which is the unpaid leave. On page 1, line 20, we add 'the death of an employee's child'. In section 2, is his accrued time off. This would allow him to use his sick leave benefits. On page 2, line 4, it does limit it to the first 6 months within the death of the child. Does not mean that they get 6 months leave, but they have a 6-month window to use the leave. In section 3, the House added a study to review all employee leave. Should we continue with sick leave and PTO as separate or merging full PTO system? I had no issues with the study language. The House did further amend on section 2 that an employee can't use more than 160 hours of unpaid leave for this purpose. The most you can accrue is 480 hours. I request that you do not change anything because the House will not negotiate. (13.17) Any questions?

Chairman Davison: What is reasonable? What does it mean and whose definition?

Rep. Mock: That is already a provision for other causes. There is an understanding that harm can't be with the employers by your absence.

Sen. Kristin Roers: I did get the opportunity to meet Ryan. I can't believe this has not come up more times already.

Rep. Mock: Here is the suicide hot line: 1-800-273-8255 or text 741741. (15.10)

Chairman Davison: Any for in support? Any agencies? Any against? Hearing is closed. I think a few things could be improved in the bill. I agree with Rep. Mock we are better off leaving it alone.

Sen. Erin Oban: I move a DO PASS.

Sen. Kristin Roers: I second.

Chairman Davison: Any discussion? Take the roll: **YES --7 NO -- 0 -0-absent.**
PASSED. Sen. Erin Oban will carry the bill.

Date: _____
Roll Call Vote #: _____

2019 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES 401 470
BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description:

Recommendation: ☒ Adopt Amendment ☒ Do Pass ☐ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations
☐ Place on Consent Calendar

Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐

Motion Made By Ser. Chan Seconded By Ser. Roers

[illegible]

Total (Yes) 7 No 0

Absent

Floor Assignment Sen. Oban

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1470, as engrossed: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Sen. Davison, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB 1470 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

2019 TESTIMONY

HB 1470

#1 2-8-19
14B 1470

NDLA, H GVA - Hart, Carmen

From: Mock, Corey R.
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 1:51 PM
To: NDLA, H GVA - Hart, Carmen
Subject: FW: Testimony

Sorry for the delay, Carmen. Here's the email testimony Ryan Slapnicka provided.

Corey

Corey Mock
North Dakota State Representative: District 18
Mobile: (701) 732-0085
crmock@nd.gov

Good Morning,

Thank you for allowing me to testify this morning. I had every intention to be there today but Mother Nature has her own plan. As I write this, the roads are still closed.

I want to start by telling you my story.

I lost my son Tristen to Suicide on Sept 4th 2015. I woke the morning of the 4th as any other proud father and ended the day a broken man. The days that followed are blurry. Sleepless nights and busy days. Hours spent wondering why and what I could have done or did not do.

My employer at the time was sympathetic to my loss, I would never say anything less. They gave me the normal 3 day Bereavement that was standard for the loss of a loved one and fortunately my co workers donated another 6 days. After 9 days of being away from work I was expected to return to my duties as if nothing had happened.

9 days may be enough for some but it certainly was not enough for me. I suffered, and still do, from depression, anxiety, and PTSD. I was a police officer for 7 years and with the death of my son, many dark memories came flooding back. I could have benefited by having some time off, as well as my employer. My mind was not on my job, and yet I was there.

Losing a child, no matter the reason, is the most gut wrenching, life altering thing anyone can go through. In a matter of months I lost my grandmother, father, and son. Losing my grandmother and father was painful but it is a natural progression of life. No parent should ever have to bury their child.

Currently FMLA covers the birth of a child, the adoption of a child, and the care of a loved one. FMLA says nothing about the loss of a child. I feel that when FMLA was first written, the loss of a child was simply overlooked. No one wants to think of this tragedy.

I am asking this committee to consider adding Parental Bereavement to the Family Medical Leave. Ultimately this needs to extend to more than just state employees but this would be a start.

After Tristen died I struggled daily. I tried to find some meaning to it all. I decided to work on Parental Bereavement because I'm not the only one that has or will lose a child. I hope that by adding Parental Bereavement parents will be able to find the help or have time to heal without the fear of losing their job.

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2-8-19

Thank you for your time and consideration. And again I apologize for not being there today.

Ryan Slapnicka

Sent from my iPad

CHAPTER 54-52.4
STATE EMPLOYEE LEAVE POLICIES

2
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2-8-19

54-52.4-01. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Child" means a child by birth, an adopted or foster child, a stepchild, or a legal ward, who is:
 - a. Less than eighteen years of age; or
 - b. More than seventeen years of age and incapable of providing self-care because of a serious health condition.
2. "Employee" means an individual employed in this state by an employer, who has been employed by the employer for at least twelve months, and who has worked at least one thousand two hundred fifty hours for the employer over the previous twelve months.
3. "Employer" means the state but does not include any political subdivision of the state.
4. "Employment benefit" means all benefits provided or made available to employees by an employer, including education, health care, insurance, leave, and retirement benefits.
5. "Health care provider" means a registered nurse licensed under chapter 43-12.1, a physician licensed under chapter 43-17, a psychologist licensed under chapter 43-32, or a licensed certified social worker licensed under chapter 43-41.
6. "Health care services" means services rendered by a health care provider within the scope of the provider's license, including long-term care and hospice and hospital care.
7. "Parent" means a birth parent, foster parent, adoptive parent, or stepparent.
8. "Serious health condition" means a disabling physical or mental illness, injury, impairment, or condition involving:
 - a. Inpatient care in a hospital licensed under chapter 23-16 or operated by the United States or this state, long-term care facility as defined in section 50-10.1-01, or hospice program licensed under chapter 23-17.4; or
 - b. Outpatient care that requires continuing treatment by a health care provider.
9. "Spouse" means an employee's husband or wife.

54-52.4-02. Family leave.

1. An employer shall grant an employee's request for a family leave of absence for any of the following reasons:
 - a. To care for the employee's child by birth, if the leave concludes within twelve months of the child's birth.
 - b. To care for a child placed with the employee, by a child-placing agency licensed under chapter 50-12, for adoption or as a precondition to adoption under section 14-15-12, but not both, or for foster care, if the leave concludes within twelve months of the child's placement.
 - c. To care for the employee's child, spouse, or parent if the child, spouse, or parent has a serious health condition.
 - d. Because of the employee's serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's job.
2. For any combination of reasons specified in subsection 1, an employee may take family leave in any twelve-month period for not more than twelve workweeks. The twelve weeks of family leave may be taken intermittently for leave under subdivisions a or b of subsection 1 if approved by the employer. The twelve weeks of family leave may be taken intermittently for leave under subdivisions c or d of subsection 1 if the leave is medically necessary. If an employee normally works a part-time schedule or variable hours, the amount of leave to which an employee is entitled must be determined on a pro rata or proportional basis by comparing the new schedule with the employee's normal schedule.

North Dakota Legislative Branch

Bill Actions for SB 2043

Send me to Bill No. (9999):

HJ=House Journal; SJ=Senate Journal

Introduced by Legislative Management

(Judiciary Committee)

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 1 of section 12.1-23-09, subsection 6 of section 13-04.1-09.2, sections 14-03-01, 14-03-08, 14-05-06, 14-05-18, 14-07-01, 14-07-03, 14-07-04, 14-07-06, 14-07-07, 14-07-08, 14-07-12, 14-07-13, and 14-07-14, subsection 9 of section 14-12.2-28, subsection 4 of section 14-14.1-30, sections 14-15-03, 14-15-20, 14-18-08, and 20.1-03-06, subsections 8, 29, and 32 of section 20.1-03-12, subdivision b of subsection 1 of section 30.1-10-04, sections 35-01-04, 47-18-04, 47-18-05, 47-18-14, and 50-25.1-10, subsection 3 of section 54-52.4-02, subsection 2 of section 57-38-31, subsection 5 of section 57-40.3-04, section 57-40.3-07, and subsection 3 of section 57-40.5-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the definition of marriage and the recognition of marital relationships.

Date	Chamber	Meeting Description	Journal
01/03	Senate	Introduced, first reading, referred Judiciary Committee	SJ 27
01/04	Senate	Committee Hearing 10:30	
01/09	Senate	Reported back, do not pass, placed on calendar 4 2 0	SJ 62
01/10	Senate	Second reading, failed to pass, yeas 15 nays 31	SJ 72

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pg 1

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pg 2

Funeral and Honor Guard Leave

- Funeral leave is a leave of absence with pay of up to 24 working hours that may be granted, at the discretion of the appointing authority, to an employee to attend or make arrangements for a funeral, as a result of a death in the employee's family, or in the family of an employee's spouse.
- "Family" means the husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, stepparents, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, stepchildren, foster parents, foster children, daughter-in-law, son-in-law.
- Funeral leave and honor guard leave is not considered sick leave or annual leave.
- Honor guard leave is a leave of absence from work with pay of up to 24 working hours per calendar year for an employee to participate in an honor guard for a funeral service of a veteran. The employee must be serving in an essential ceremonial role as part of the official funeral service of a veteran such as a member of the flag bearers, a member of the flag-folding team, a member of the firing party, the bugler, or the honor guard captain.

Recommendations

- In the case of a death in the family, the appointing authority is advised to make the necessary work arrangements, so that a request for funeral or honor guard leave may be granted even if the absence of the employee might interfere with the normal operations of the agency.
- For the death of a relative or friend not covered by the funeral leave rule, it is appropriate to request and use annual leave.

References

NDCC 54-44.3

NDAC 4-07-14

Mock, Corey R.

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3-15-19
Att #1
pg 1

From: Ryan Slapnicka <ryanslapnicka@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 8, 2019 5:07 AM
To: Mock, Corey R.
Subject: Testimony

***** CAUTION: This email originated from an outside source. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know they are safe. *****

Good Morning,

Thank you for allowing me to testify this morning. I had every intention to be there today but Mother Nature has her own plan. As I write this, the roads are still closed.

I want to start by telling you my story.

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9 days may be enough for some but it certainly was not enough for me. I suffered, and still do, from depression, anxiety, and PTSD. I was a police officer for 7 years and with the death of my son, many dark memories came flooding back. I could have benefited by having some time off, as well as my employer. My mind was not on my job, and yet I was there.

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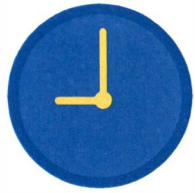
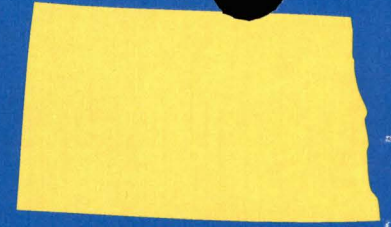
Thank you for your time and consideration. And again I apologize for not being there today.

Ryan Slapnicka

Ryan Slapnicka

Suicide Facts & Figures:

North Dakota 2018*



On average, one person dies by suicide every 63 hours in the state.

More than five times as many people die by suicide in North Dakota annually than by homicide.

The total deaths to suicide reflect a total of 3,430 years of potential life lost (YPLL) before age 65.



Suicide cost North Dakota a total of **\$140,345,000** of combined lifetime medical and work loss cost in 2010, or an average of **\$1,324,010 per suicide death.**

*Based on most recent 2016 data from CDC. Learn more at afsp.org/statistics.



leading cause of death in North Dakota

2nd leading

cause of death for ages 15-34

4th leading

cause of death for ages 35-54

7th leading

cause of death for ages 55-64

19th leading

cause of death for ages 65 & older

Suicide Death Rates

	Number of Deaths by Suicide	Rate per 100,000 Population	State Rank
North Dakota	140	19.00	12
Nationally	44,965	13.42	



American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention

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AFSP
2020

Suicide Facts & Figures: North Dakota 2018

Suicide Prevention Programs and Initiatives

- The North Dakota Department of Health, Division of Injury Prevention and Control houses the statewide Suicide Prevention Program (<http://www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention>). Suicide Prevention Funds focus on primary prevention and early intervention programs in health care and behavioral health care settings, schools, and communities.
- In 2017, the North Dakota Department of Health awarded \$500,000 to several suicide prevention programs throughout the state, including Spirit Lake and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, FirstLink, PATH Inc., and six Regional Education Associations (Great Northwest, Mid-Dakota, Missouri River, Northcentral, Northeast, and Roughrider), among others. The grants are part of a \$1.2 million appropriation maintained by the Governor and State Legislature during the 2017 session. See <http://bit.ly/2FhrJDc>.
- The North Dakota Department of Health, Division of Injury Prevention and Control released the North Dakota Suicide Prevention Plan 2017-2020 to focus and coordinate statewide suicide prevention efforts; AFSP-North Dakota participated in development of the plan. See http://www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention/image/cache/ND_Suicide_Prevention_Plan_2017_to_2020.pdf.
- In 2017, the law was repealed that required middle and high school teachers, administrators, and instructional staff to receive at least 2 hours of professional development annually in youth suicide risk indicators, appropriate responses, and referral sources (formerly § 15.1-19-24, repealed via S.L. 2017 ch.350, § 6). Current law (§ 15.1-07-34) now states that, every two years, school districts must provide a minimum of 8 hours of professional development training on youth behavioral health to all elementary, middle, and high school teachers and administrators. Based on the annual needs assessment of each district, training topics are selected from 8 provided categories, one of which is suicide prevention (SB 2038, adopted 4/7/17).

Get Involved

The **AFSP North Dakota Chapter** brings together people of all backgrounds in communities throughout the state to fight suicide. We help fund research, offer educational programs, advocate for public policy and support those affected by suicide.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact:

AFSP North Dakota
northdakota@afsp.org

Become an Advocate

AFSP's North Dakota advocacy volunteers build relationships with public officials and advocate on behalf of sound suicide prevention policy.

Visit afsp.org/advocate to sign up!

Together, We CAN Prevent Youth Suicide

Issue Brief

HB 1470
3-15-19
AH #1
pg 4

Suicide is a leading, yet preventable public health problem in North Dakota.

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for teens and young adults ages 15-24. In 2017, we lost 154 North Dakota residents to suicide; more than 1 in 5 were under the age of 24.

According to the latest Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDC, 2015), in the year before the survey, more than 1 in 4 (28.9%) North Dakota high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row; 16.7% seriously considered attempting suicide; 14.5% reported making a plan about how they would attempt suicide, and 13.5% attempted suicide one or more times.

To prevent youth suicide, we need to identify students who may be struggling or in crisis and take an active role in connecting them to help.

We know that upwards of 90% of people who ultimately die by suicide were living with a diagnosable mental health condition at the time of their death; individuals at risk must be aware of available mental health resources and treatment services and able to access them.

SUPPORT SB 2149: Student Mental Health Education

SB 2149 [Sens. Heckaman, Grabinger, & Robinson; Reps. Devlin & Vigessa] would require school districts to provide at least 3 hours of mental health awareness and suicide prevention education to all students in grades 7-12 that includes information on warning signs and risk factors, how to identify at-risk peers, and the availability of resources.

Youth suicide can be prevented through early detection of students who may be in crisis or struggling with their mental health and connecting those students and their families to resources and treatment services. Prevention efforts must include educating students on the signs and symptoms of mental illness and suicide risk and empowering them to know when and how to reach out for help when they notice warning signs or risk factors in themselves or their peers. Transparency and easily-accessible information can reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness and reinforce the notion that it is a sign of strength to seek help.

Committee: Education



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SUPPORT HB 1262: School Safety & Crisis Hotline Program

HB 1262 [Reps. Satrom, Jones, Paulson, & Schauer; Sen. Clemens] would require the attorney general to establish and administer a statewide program for receiving reports and other information related to school and student safety, including potential self-harm and potential harm or criminal acts directed at students, school employees, or schools. The bill requires the program to include:

- a crisis hotline that must be available to receive reports and information 24/7
- crisis intervention, including suicide prevention, for individuals experiencing emotional distress or psychiatric distress
- access to counseling and other resources for students and staff at schools that have experienced a crisis, emergency, or suicide
- means for individuals to anonymously report incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, or hazing, as well as physical or sexual abuse committed by a school employee or school volunteer
- the provision of program awareness and education materials to all preschool, elementary, and secondary schools in the state at no charge to the schools.

By offering immediate help to students that may need it, a statewide crisis hotline provides invaluable support at crucial times and connects students to local services and resources. Timely access to mental health services and supports can save lives.

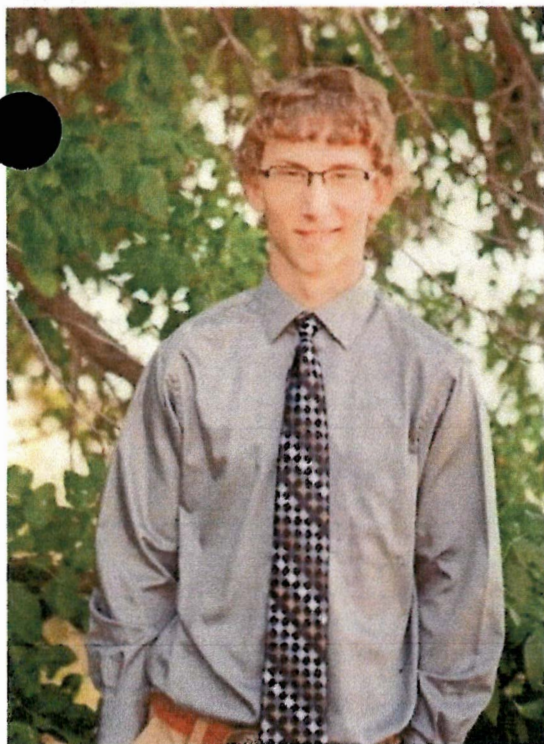
AFSP strongly encourages the state to dedicate recurring state funds to this effort and to consider modeling North Dakota's statewide program after the *SafeUT* program in Utah, which is fully integrated into the state's crisis response system through the University of Utah, includes a free mobile app, and is staffed by licensed clinicians 24/7. See <https://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/safe-ut/> for details.

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Why I Advocate



Ryan Slapnicka

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I advocate for my son Tristen.

