



National Lieutenant Governors Association

1 **Resolution Promoting Suicide Awareness and Prevention**

2 **WHEREAS**, the country has endured an unprecedented pandemic with a clear impact on mental health
3 and a yet unknown impact on suicide rates, and

4 **WHEREAS**, there is a two-year delay in making suicide data available to health professionals and
5 researchers in the United States due to a lack of a uniform reporting mechanism for deaths by suicideⁱ,
6 and

7 **WHEREAS**, a real-time reporting system would allow existing suicide-related services to more
8 effectively meet the needs of their communities, similar to how public health professionals have used
9 data regarding the spread of the novel coronavirus, and

10 **WHEREAS**, a suicide occurs every 11 minutesⁱⁱ and it is estimated that each suicide impacts up to 135
11 individualsⁱⁱⁱ and that upwards of 40 percent of Americans are impacted by suicide^{iv}, and

12 **WHEREAS**, most communities in the United States rely on systems designed for medical emergencies
13 to respond to individuals in a mental health crisis^v, and

14 **WHEREAS**, suicide is an issue that does not discriminate and suicide prevention and access to crisis
15 intervention services are a bipartisan issue, and

16 **WHEREAS**, 9-8-8 has been established by Congress with unanimous bipartisan support as the national
17 3-digit National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the volume of calls is expected to double when the line
18 goes live in 2022, and

19 **WHEREAS**, populations at high risk of suicide include residents of rural counties in the U.S. who have
20 a significantly greater rate of suicide than the national average; and American Indian and Alaska Natives
21 who have the highest rate of suicide of any U.S. racial/ethnic group; and Black youth who have the
22 fastest increasing suicide death rate of any U.S. racial/ethnic group; and youth who are lesbian, gay,
23 bisexual, transgender, or queer who are 4 times more likely to contemplate suicide than their peers^{viii},
24 and

25 **WHEREAS**, all persons in crisis require timely access to effective crisis services to address mental
26 health emergencies, and



National Lieutenant Governors Association

27 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the National Lieutenant Governors Association
28 encourages effective implementation of crisis services through:
29 1) the development of real-time data collection mechanisms to track suicide deaths in the United States
30 in real-time to enable health professionals and researchers to bolster efforts to prevent suicide, and
31 2) working to ensure that 9-8-8, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and
32 other crisis services are the most effective by being equipped to provide specialized resources to
33 high-risk populations.

ADOPTED, this day, the 27th of August 2021.

Sponsors: Secretary of State Ed Buchanan (R – Wyoming), Lt. Governor Pamela Evette (R – South Carolina), Lt. Governor Adam Gregg (R – Iowa), Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long (D – Delaware), Lt. Governor Kevin Meyer (R – Alaska), Lt. Governor Dianne Primavera (D – Colorado), Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford (R – Maryland), Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton (D – Illinois)

i “Understanding Death Data,” CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/projects/understanding-death-data.html>

ii “Suicide Facts,” CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/>

iii “How many people are affected by one suicide,” centre for suicide prevention, <https://www.suicideinfo.ca/how-many-people-are-affected-by-one-suicide/>

iv “Facts and Statistics,” American Association of Suicidology, <https://suicidology.org/facts-and-statistics/>

v “National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis,” SAMHSA, <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/national-guidelines-for-behavioral-health-crisis-care-02242020.pdf>

vi Public Law No: 116-172 (10/17/2020) / S.2661 - National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020, U.S. Congress

vii “Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America,” A Report to Congress from the Congressional Black Caucus, December 2019.