

By the Committee on Children and Families; and Senators Lynn and Wilson

300-2229-04

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to suicide prevention; creating  
3           s. 397.3335, F.S.; creating the Statewide  
4           Office for Suicide Prevention in the Office of  
5           Drug Control; providing the goals and  
6           objectives of the office; creating the position  
7           of statewide coordinator for the statewide  
8           office; specifying the education and experience  
9           requirements for the position of coordinator;  
10          detailing the duties and responsibilities of  
11          the coordinator; creating s. 397.3336, F.S.;  
12          creating the Suicide Prevention Coordinating  
13          Council within the Office of Drug Control;  
14          providing the scope of activities for the  
15          coordinating council; creating an interagency  
16          workgroup for state agencies within the  
17          coordinating council in order to coordinate  
18          state agency plans for suicide prevention;  
19          authorizing the coordinating council to  
20          assemble an ad hoc committee to advise the  
21          coordinating council; providing for membership  
22          on the coordinating council; authorizing the  
23          coordinating council to seek and accept grants  
24          or funds from any source to support its  
25          operation; providing an appropriation and  
26          authorizing an additional position; providing  
27          an effective date.  
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29   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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1           Section 1. Section 397.3335, Florida Statutes, is  
2 created to read:

3           397.3335 Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention.--

4           (1)(a) The Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention is  
5 created in the Office of Drug Control within the Executive  
6 Office of the Governor.

7           (b) The statewide office shall develop a network of  
8 community-based programs to improve suicide prevention  
9 initiatives. The network shall identify and work to eliminate  
10 barriers that impede providing suicide prevention services to  
11 individuals who are at risk of suicide.

12           (c) The network of community-based programs shall  
13 consist of stakeholders advocating suicide prevention,  
14 including, but not limited to, not-for-profit suicide  
15 prevention organizations, faith-based suicide prevention  
16 organizations, law enforcement agencies, first responders to  
17 emergency calls, suicide prevention community coalitions,  
18 schools and universities, mental health agencies, health care  
19 providers, and school personnel.

20           (2) The statewide office shall, within available  
21 resources:

22           (a) Implement the statewide plan prepared by the  
23 Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council;

24           (b) Build a network of community-based programs to  
25 integrate suicide prevention initiatives into the programs'  
26 activities;

27           (c) Increase public awareness concerning topics  
28 relating to suicide prevention;

29           (d) Coordinate education and training curricula in  
30 suicide prevention efforts for law enforcement personnel,  
31 first responders to emergency calls, health care providers,

1 school employees, and other persons who may have contact with  
2 persons at risk of suicide; and

3 (e) Direct an interagency workgroup within the Suicide  
4 Prevention Coordinating Council to prepare a suicide  
5 prevention communication plan among state agencies. The  
6 communication plan must be incorporated into the council's  
7 statewide plan.

8 (3) Contingent upon an appropriation specifically  
9 intended for this purpose, the director of the Office of Drug  
10 Control shall employ a coordinator for the Statewide Office  
11 for Suicide Prevention. Unless waived by the director of the  
12 Office of Drug Control, the coordinator must:

13 (a) Have the following education and employment  
14 experience:

15 1. A bachelor's degree in social work, psychology,  
16 sociology, counseling, public health, or a closely related  
17 field and 5 or more years of work experience in behavioral  
18 health care or a closely related field; or

19 2. A master's or a doctoral degree in social work,  
20 psychology, sociology, counseling, public health, or a closely  
21 related field and 2 or more years of work experience in  
22 behavioral health or a closely related field.

23 (b) Possess the following skills:

24 1. Significant professional experience in social  
25 services, mental health, or a closely related field;

26 2. Knowledge of group behavior and dynamics, methods  
27 of facilitation, community development, behavioral health  
28 treatment and prevention programs, and community-based  
29 behavioral health problems;

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1           3. Experience in working with community groups and  
2 constituents that are diverse and representative of the  
3 gender, ethnic, and racial populations in this state; and

4           4. Experience in writing grants and technical reports.

5           (4) The coordinator shall work under the direction of  
6 the director to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in  
7 this section. Contingent upon specific appropriations, the  
8 coordinator shall:

9           (a) Facilitate an interagency workgroup within the  
10 Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council to integrate state  
11 agency programs for suicide prevention into a unified  
12 statewide plan;

13           (b) Conduct a review of local, state, and national  
14 suicide prevention programs for examples of innovative suicide  
15 prevention models. If innovative models are discovered, the  
16 coordinator shall prepare a presentation to describe the  
17 feasibility of implementing some or all of the innovation  
18 models in this state. The innovative models, and the  
19 feasibility of their implementation in this state, shall be  
20 evaluated by the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council;

21           (c) Develop and maintain an Internet website with  
22 links to appropriate suicide prevention resource documents,  
23 suicide hotlines, state and community mental health agencies,  
24 and appropriate national suicide prevention organizations;

25           (d) Identify and disseminate information regarding  
26 crisis services for suicide prevention;

27           (e) Join with stakeholders in suicide prevention to  
28 develop public awareness and media campaigns in each county  
29 directed towards persons who are at risk of suicide;

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1           (f) Provide technical assistance to educational  
2 activities for residents of this state relating to suicide  
3 prevention;

4           (g) Cooperate with school districts to develop  
5 training and counseling programs for school-based suicide  
6 prevention activities. The coordinator and school districts  
7 must also develop a method by which to evaluate each  
8 prevention training and counseling program;

9           (h) Join with stakeholders in suicide prevention to  
10 develop education and training programs for suicide  
11 prevention. The education and training programs must be  
12 directed first to persons who have face-to-face contact with  
13 individuals who may be at risk of suicide. The training must  
14 assist persons to recognize when an individual is at risk of  
15 suicide and on how to properly refer those individuals to  
16 treatment or support services;

17           (i) Review current research data and findings to  
18 identify at-risk populations, factors relating to suicide, and  
19 suicide prevention activities and disseminate this research to  
20 the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council to develop  
21 strategies to prevent suicide; and

22           (j) Develop and submit proposals to agencies of the  
23 state and federal government and to nongovernmental  
24 organizations to fund suicide prevention activities.

25           Section 2. Section 397.3336, Florida Statutes, is  
26 created to read:

27           397.3336 Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council;  
28 creation; membership; duties.--There is created within the  
29 Office of Drug Control a Suicide Prevention Coordinating  
30 Council. The council shall develop strategies for preventing  
31 suicide.

1           (1) SCOPE OF ACTIVITY.--The Suicide Prevention  
2 Coordinating Council shall:  
3           (a) Develop a statewide plan for suicide prevention  
4 with the guiding principal being that suicide is a preventable  
5 problem. The statewide plan shall:  
6           1. Align and provide direction for statewide suicide  
7 prevention initiatives;  
8           2. Establish partnerships with state and private  
9 agencies to promote public awareness of suicide prevention;  
10           3. Address specific populations in this state who are  
11 at risk for suicide;  
12           4. Improve access to help individuals in acute  
13 situations; and  
14           5. Identify resources to support the implementation of  
15 the statewide plan.  
16           (b) Create an interagency workgroup within the council  
17 in order to incorporate state agency plans for suicide  
18 prevention into the statewide plan. The interagency workgroup  
19 must include, but need not be limited to:  
20           1. The Secretary of Elderly Affairs, or his or her  
21 designee;  
22           2. The Secretary of Health, or his or her designee;  
23           3. The Commissioner of Education, or his or her  
24 designee;  
25           4. The Secretary of Health Care Administration, or his  
26 or her designee;  
27           5. The Secretary of Juvenile Justice, or his or her  
28 designee;  
29           6. The executive director of the Department of Law  
30 Enforcement, or his or her designee;  
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1           7. The Secretary of Children and Family Services, or  
2 his or her designee;

3           8. The Secretary of Corrections, or his or her  
4 designee; and

5           9. The executive director of the Department of  
6 Veterans' Affairs, or his or her designee.

7           (c) Assemble an ad hoc advisory committee with  
8 membership from outside the council when necessary for the  
9 council to receive advice and assistance in carrying out its  
10 responsibilities.

11           (d) Advise the Statewide Office for Suicide  
12 Prevention.

13           (e) Make findings and recommendations regarding  
14 suicide prevention programs and activities. The council shall  
15 prepare an annual report and present it to the Governor, the  
16 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
17 Representatives by January 1, 2005, and each year thereafter.  
18 The annual report must describe the status of existing and  
19 planned initiatives identified in the statewide plan for  
20 suicide prevention and any recommendations arising therefrom.

21           (2) MEMBERSHIP.--The Suicide Prevention Coordinating  
22 Council shall consist of 23 members.

23           (a) Nine members shall be appointed by the director of  
24 the Office of Drug Control and shall represent the following  
25 organizations:

26           1. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Corporation,  
27 Inc., described in s. 394.655;

28           2. The Florida Association of School Psychologists;

29           3. The Florida Sheriffs Association;

30           4. The Suicide Prevention Action Network USA;

31           5. The Florida Initiative of Suicide Prevention;

- 1           6. The Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition;  
2           7. The Alzheimer's Association;  
3           8. The Florida School Board Association; and  
4           9. A representative from the Governor's Mentoring  
5 Initiative.

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7 Each identified organization shall recommend three individuals  
8 to the director for appointment to membership on the  
9 coordinating council.

10           (b) The following state officials shall be appointed  
11 to serve on the coordinating council:

12           1. The Secretary of Elderly Affairs, or his or her  
13 designee;

14           2. The Secretary of Health, or his or her designee;

15           3. The Commissioner of Education, or his or her  
16 designee;

17           4. The Secretary of Health Care Administration, or his  
18 or her designee;

19           5. The Secretary of Juvenile Justice, or his or her  
20 designee;

21           6. The Secretary of Corrections, or his or her  
22 designee;

23           7. The executive director of the Department of Law  
24 Enforcement, or his or her designee;

25           8. The executive director of Veterans' Affairs, or his  
26 or her designee; and

27           9. The Secretary of Children and Family Services, or  
28 his or her designee.

29           (c) The Governor shall appoint 5 additional members to  
30 the coordinating council. The appointees shall have expertise  
31 critical to the prevention of suicide or represent an



1 organization that is not already represented on the  
2 coordinating council.

3 (d) Council members shall be appointed to terms of 4  
4 years. Any vacancy on the coordinating council shall be filled  
5 in the same manner as the original appointment, and any member  
6 appointed to fill a vacancy occurring because of death,  
7 resignation, or ineligibility for membership shall serve only  
8 for the unexpired term of the member's predecessor. A member  
9 is eligible for reappointment.

10 (e) Members of the coordinating council shall serve  
11 without compensation. Any member of the coordinating council  
12 who is a public employee is entitled to reimbursement for per  
13 diem and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

14 (3) MEETINGS.--

15 (a) The director of the Office of Drug Control shall  
16 be a nonvoting, ex officio member of the coordinating council  
17 and shall act as chair.

18 (b) The coordinating council shall meet at least  
19 quarterly or upon the call of the chair. The council meetings  
20 may be held via teleconference or other electronic means.

21 (c) Public organizations shall participate and  
22 cooperate with the coordinating council.

23 (4) FUNDING.--The coordinating council for suicide  
24 prevention may seek and accept grants or funds from any  
25 federal, state, or local source to support its operation and  
26 defray the expenses incurred in its operation and  
27 implementation of this section.

28 Section 3. The sum of \$100,000 is appropriated from  
29 the General Revenue Fund, and one additional full-time  
30 equivalent position is authorized, to the Office of Drug  
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1 Control for the purpose of implementing this act during the  
2 2004-2005 fiscal year.

3 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.

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5 STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN  
6 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
7 Senate Bill 2042

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8 Clarifies that the focus of the network of community-based  
9 programs is to address the needs of individuals who are at  
10 risk of suicide.

10 Requires that the interagency workgroup include in its  
11 membership the Secretary of the Department of Corrections and  
12 the Executive Director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs  
13 or their designees.

13 Reduces the number of appointments made by the Director of the  
14 Office of Drug Control to the coordinating council.

14 Requires that the Executive Director of Veterans' Affairs, or  
15 his or her designee, be appointed to the coordinating council.

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