

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 447 Suicide Prevention
SPONSOR(S): Gibson and others
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** CS/CS/SB 210

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) <u>Future of Florida's Families Committee</u>	<u>7 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>Preston</u>	<u>Collins</u>
2) <u>Governmental Operations Committee</u>	<u></u>	<u>Brazzell</u>	<u>Everhart</u>
3) <u>Transportation & Economic Development Appropriations Committee</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
4) <u>Health & Families Council</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
5) <u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

HB 447 creates the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention in the Office of Drug Control within the Executive Office of the Governor and specifies duties for the office including:

- Developing a network of community-based programs to improve suicide prevention initiatives;
- Implementing the statewide plan prepared by the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council;
- Increasing public awareness concerning topics relating to suicide prevention;
- Coordinating education and training curricula in suicide prevention efforts for professionals who may have contact with persons at risk of committing suicide; and
- Directing an interagency workgroup within the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council.

Subject to a specific appropriation, the bill requires the director of the Office of Drug Control to employ a coordinator for the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention. Duties of the coordinator include facilitating an interagency workgroup, reviewing suicide prevention programs to identify innovative models, developing and maintaining an Internet website related to prevention, and assisting in the development of public awareness and media campaigns.

The bill also creates:

- A Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council (coordinating council) of 25 members in the Office of Drug Control within the Executive Office of the Governor. The coordinating council is required, among other things, to create a statewide plan for suicide prevention and create a state interagency workgroup in order to incorporate state agency plans for suicide prevention into such statewide plan.
- An interagency workgroup (workgroup) within the council in order to incorporate state agency plans for suicide prevention into the statewide plan.

The bill specifies the membership, terms of office, and the duties of both the coordinating council and the workgroup. The coordinating council is to make findings and recommendations regarding suicide prevention programs and activities, and is required to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature.

The bill does not contain an appropriation to fund the required provisions. The Office of Drug Control reported that the Governor has included \$100,000 in his recommended budget to support the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention. There appears to be no fiscal impact on local governments.

This document does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill sponsor or House of Representatives.

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DATE: 3/29/2005

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

Provide limited government--the bill authorizes one additional FTE: a coordinator for the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention (statewide office). The bill provides for no additional staff or no administrative support for the required work of the statewide office, the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council (coordinating council), or the interagency workgroup so it is unclear who will provide that additional support. If those duties are to be assumed by existing staff, it will increase the work responsibilities of those individuals.

The bill creates a new coordinating council, the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council, with 25 members. Within this coordinating council is to be an interagency workgroup. The bill requires state employees to serve on both the coordinating council and the interagency workgroup, which adds to their work-related responsibilities. The bill also requires representatives from other entities, such as the Florida Association of School Psychologists, the Alzheimer's Association, the state chapter of AARP, and the Florida Sheriff's Association, to serve on the coordinating council.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Current situation

Florida currently ranks 15th in the nation for the number of suicides. There were 2,294 suicides in the state during 2003, making it the ninth leading cause of death for the overall population. Suicide has been identified as the third leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds, the second leading cause of death for 25-34 year olds, and the fifth leading cause of death for 35-44 year olds.¹

In 2000, Governor Jeb Bush directed the Florida Office of Drug Control² to assist in decreasing the incidence of suicide in Florida. The director of the Florida Office of Drug Control convened a workgroup to begin establishing an infrastructure for a state suicide prevention task force, now called the Florida Task Force on Suicide Prevention. In August 2002, the Task Force released the *Florida Suicide Prevention Strategy* to provide policy direction to Florida's state and community leaders in order to decrease the incidence of youth suicide in Florida. The paper contained three stated goals:

- To decrease the incidence of suicide in Florida by one third, from 13.64 per 100,000 in 1998 to approximately 9.0 per 100,000 in 2005;
- To decrease the incidence of teen suicide in Florida by one third, from 9.52 per 100,000 in 1998 to approximately 6.0 per 100,000 in 2005; and
- To decrease the incidence of elder suicide in Florida by one third, from 20.34 per 100,000 in 1998 to approximately 13.0 per 100,000 in 2005.³

According to the *Florida Suicide Prevention Strategy 2005-2010*, published by the Office of Drug Control, incidence of suicide has decreased slightly but the stated goals have not been achieved.

According to Jim McDonough, Director of the Office of Drug Control, the office currently is performing the activities outlined in the bill, including coordinating an advisory body.

¹ Florida Vital Statistics, *Annual Report*. 2003.

² The Florida Office of Drug Control was created in 1999 within the Executive Office of the Governor (Chapter 99-187, Laws of Florida) to coordinate Florida's efforts related to the reduction of drug abuse and its consequences to the state. See section 397.332, Florida Statutes.

³ Florida Task Force on Suicide Prevention. *Preventing Suicide in Florida, A Strategy Paper*. Office of Drug Control, Executive Office of the Governor. 2002.

Proposed changes

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- Increasing public awareness concerning topics relating to suicide prevention;
- Coordinating education and training curricula in suicide prevention efforts for professionals who may have contact with persons at risk of committing suicide; and
- Directing an interagency workgroup within the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council.

Subject to a specific appropriation, the bill requires the director of the Office of Drug Control to employ a coordinator of the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention and specifies the education, experience, and skills that are to be considered when hiring such coordinator. Duties of the coordinator include:

- Facilitating an interagency workgroup.
- Reviewing suicide prevention programs to identify innovative models,
- Developing and maintaining an Internet website related to prevention, and
- Assisting in the development of public awareness and media campaigns.

The bill also creates a Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council in the Office of Drug Control within the Executive Office of the Governor. The council is required, among other things, to create a statewide plan for suicide prevention and create a state interagency workgroup in order to incorporate state agency plans for suicide prevention into such statewide plan. The bill specifies the membership, terms of office, and the duties of both the council and the workgroup. The council is to make findings and recommendations regarding suicide prevention programs and activities, and is required to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1 creates s. 397.3335, F.S., relating to the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention.

Section 2 creates s. 397.3336, F.S., relating to the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council.

Section 3 provides an effective date of July 1, 2005.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

The bill does not contain an appropriation to fund the required provisions. The Office of Drug Control reported that the Governor has included \$100,000 in his recommended budget to support the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

The bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds. The bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities. The bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities have to raise revenue.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

Chapter 20, Florida Statutes, provides for the organizational structure of the executive branch of state government and also provides a uniform nomenclature for entities within that branch. The Legislature is not bound by the definitions contained in that chapter and may create executive branch entities that do not conform to the standard; however, consistency with that uniform nomenclature provides for greater consistency across state government entities. Section 20.04, Florida Statutes, does not currently contain a general definition for "office," although there are a few departments that are explicitly created with offices.⁴ Typically, such "offices" do not formally contain other "offices," but "units" or "sections." This bill creates an "office" (Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention) within an "office" (Office of Drug Control) within an "office" (the Executive Office of the Governor).

Section 20.03(9), Florida Statutes, defines the term "coordinating council" to mean an interdepartmental advisory body created by law to coordinate programs and activities for which one department has primary responsibility but in which one or more other departments have an interest. The coordinating council created by the bill does not appear to meet that definition.

The language in lines 31-43 appear to use the terms "programs," "stakeholders," and "organizations/agencies" somewhat interchangeably. A program and an organization, for example, are typically not construed to be the same type of entity. It is unclear whether the newly-created statewide

⁴ See, for example, s. 20.04(4)(5) and (6), Florida Statutes, where the Departments of Children and Family Services, Corrections and Transportation are specifically created to be outside of the uniform structure provided by chapter 20, Florida Statutes.

office is to create a network of new or currently existing community-based programs. It is also unclear how the network referenced on lines 31-43 differs from the network referred to on line 48.

All of the tasks required of the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention that are specified in lines 31-61 and 91-144 and the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council that are specified in lines 152-201 appear to be massive, complex, statewide endeavors requiring extensive resources. The bill does not provide for these resources.

The bill specifies on lines 67 through 87 the qualifications that are to be considered by the director of the Office of Drug Control when hiring a coordinator for the newly-created Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention. There is nothing in the bill that prevents an individual who does not meet those standards from being hired for the position.

The bill contains multiple reporting requirements to the Governor and the Legislature (lines 97-99, 105-108, and 195-201). It is difficult to determine whether these multiple reports are conflicting, duplicative, or necessary.

The coordinating council and the interagency workgroup created by the bill have a number of the same members in common, with the workgroup members appearing to be a "subset" of the council members. It is unclear whether it is necessary for these members to wear "two hats."

Section 20.052, F.S., requires that the terms of appointees to advisory bodies be staggered. The bill does not provide for staggering of terms.

Other agencies which could potentially house this program include the Department of Health, which oversees public health, and the Department of Children and Families, which contains the state's mental health programs.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE & COMBINED BILL CHANGES

None.