

By Senator Deutch

30-03387A-08

20082554__

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to veteran services; amending s. 14.2019,
3 F.S.; requiring the Statewide Office for Suicide
4 Prevention to establish a Veterans' Suicide Prevention and
5 Mental Health Services Program; creating s. 14.20193,
6 F.S.; establishing the program; specifying the tasks for
7 the office in implementing the program; providing minimum
8 standards for community-based providers that provide
9 services to veterans at risk for suicide and mental
10 illness; providing an appropriation; providing an
11 effective date.

12
13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

14
15 Section 1. Paragraph (e) is added to subsection (2) of
16 section 14.2019, Florida Statutes, to read:

17 14.2019 Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention.--

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

19 (e) Establish a Veterans' Suicide Prevention and Mental
20 Health Services Program as provided in s. 14.20193.

21 Section 2. Section 14.20193, Florida Statutes, is created
22 to read:

23 14.20193 Veterans' Suicide Prevention and Mental Health
24 Services Program.--

25 (1) The statewide office shall establish the Veterans'
26 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Services Program to:

27 (a) Coordinate suicide prevention and mental health
28 services and resources for veterans which are currently provided
29 by or available through the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the

30-03387A-08

20082554__

30 Department of Military Affairs, and the United States Department
31 of Veterans Affairs.

32 (b) Develop a network of behavioral health service
33 providers that provide community-based suicide prevention and
34 mental health services for veterans and their families.

35 (c) Generate guidelines and standards for behavioral
36 service providers serving veterans at risk for suicide and mental
37 illness and develop a list of community behavioral health service
38 providers who meet those standards.

39 (d) Increase public awareness about the risk of suicide and
40 mental illness among veterans.

41 (e) Coordinate education and training for professionals who
42 may have contact with veterans at risk for suicide or mental
43 illness.

44 (f) Develop a standard operating procedure for identifying
45 tier levels of support for veterans.

46 (2) Guidelines and standards for community behavioral
47 health services providers shall, at a minimum, address:

48 (a) A requirement that the provider be a nonprofit
49 organization under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, be
50 community-based, and have at least 5 years of experience
51 providing behavioral health treatment services in the community.

52 (b) The provider's capability and experience as a
53 community-based organization providing suicide prevention and
54 mental health services to the community and to the veteran
55 population.

56 (c) The provider's linkages to the veteran population,
57 community-based veterans services organizations, the federal
58 Department of Veterans Affairs, and other entities that serve and

30-03387A-08

20082554__

59 are familiar with the culture and needs of veterans. At a
60 minimum, the provider must have four cooperative agreements with
61 such organizations.

62 (d) The provider's accreditation by a state-recognized
63 accrediting organization, such as the Commission on Accreditation
64 of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Joint Commission on the
65 Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, or the Council on
66 Accreditation, particularly with respect to the service
67 components that serve veterans at risk for suicide and mental
68 illness.

69 (e) The adequacy and professional qualifications of the
70 provider's staff to meet the needs of veterans at risk for
71 suicide and mental illness.

72 (f) The provider's resources, including facilities,
73 equipment, and capacity, to ensure that services are adequate and
74 provided in a location that is amenable to the veteran
75 population, including veterans with disabilities.

76 (g) The privacy and confidentiality of client records, data
77 collected, interview information, and transcripts of group
78 discussions, including how confidential information will be
79 stored and safeguarded and who will have access to the
80 information.

81 (h) The provider's ability to collect, document, and report
82 data on performance measures and how the data is to be used to
83 manage the program and ensure continuous quality improvement.

84 Section 3. The sum of \$1.3 million in nonrecurring funds is
85 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Statewide
86 Office for Suicide Prevention for the 2008-2009 fiscal year for

30-03387A-08

20082554__

87 the purpose of funding the Veterans' Suicide Prevention and
88 Mental Health Services Program created by this act.

89 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.