

FOR CONSIDERATION By the Committee on Military Affairs and Domestic Security

583-01217A-10

20107032

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating veterans' suicide prevention;
3 directing the Department of Veterans' Affairs, in
4 partnership with the Statewide Office for Suicide
5 Prevention and the Division of Community Colleges, to
6 establish the veterans' suicide prevention pilot
7 project subject to the availability of funding;
8 specifying the purpose of the project; providing
9 project requirements; providing staff activities;
10 requiring an evaluation report for the Governor and
11 Legislature; providing for project expiration;
12 amending s. 14.20195, F.S.; revising the membership of
13 the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council to include
14 at least one veteran appointed by the Governor;
15 providing an effective date.

16
17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

18
19 Section 1. Veterans' suicide prevention pilot project.—

20 (1) PURPOSE.—The Department of Veterans' Affairs, in
21 partnership with the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention and
22 the Division of Community Colleges, and subject to the
23 availability of public or private funding, shall establish a
24 pilot project at a community college or vocational technical
25 training facility in a rural section of the state considered
26 underserved by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
27 The purpose of the pilot project is to reduce the incidence of
28 suicide among veterans by conducting outreach activities and
29 increasing access to services and supports for veterans and

583-01217A-10

20107032

30 their families who may be in need of mental health services and
31 suicide prevention counseling.

32 (2) PILOT PROJECT.—The pilot project must:

33 (a) Provide outreach to veterans, their families, and the
34 community in order to increase information on and access to
35 services for veterans who are at risk of suicide.

36 (b) Develop a veteran-to-veteran peer support program that
37 reaches out to veterans on a continual basis.

38 (c) Provide linkage and access assistance services for
39 veterans and their families to community mental health services
40 and United States Department of Veterans Affairs mental health
41 counseling services.

42 (3) PILOT PROJECT STAFF ACTIVITIES.—Pilot project staff may
43 provide veterans' benefits assistance services, organize and
44 lead a veterans' peer-to-peer support program, conduct liaison
45 and outreach with local mental health facilities and the United
46 States Department of Veterans Affairs health care system,
47 provide outreach to educational facility faculty and community
48 resources in order to educate persons about the risk of suicide
49 among veterans and the warning signs of potential suicide that
50 may be unique to veterans, and assist veterans and their
51 families in obtaining needed mental health counseling services
52 through all available federal, state, and local resources.

53 (4) PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT.—The department shall provide
54 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
55 the House of Representatives with a report describing the
56 project design, an evaluation of project efficacy, a review of
57 best practices developed during the project, and recommendations
58 regarding the application of best practices to other areas of

583-01217A-10

20107032__

59 the state. The report is due by March 1, 2013.

60 (5) EXPIRATION.—The pilot project shall expire July 1,
61 2013.

62 Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 14.20195, Florida
63 Statutes, is amended to read:

64 14.20195 Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council; creation;
65 membership; duties.—There is created within the Statewide Office
66 for Suicide Prevention a Suicide Prevention Coordinating
67 Council. The council shall develop strategies for preventing
68 suicide.

69 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council
70 shall consist of 29 ~~28~~ voting members.

71 (a) Fourteen members shall be appointed by the director of
72 the Office of Drug Control and shall represent the following
73 organizations:

74 1. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Corporation
75 described in s. 394.655.

76 2. The Florida Association of School Psychologists.

77 3. The Florida Sheriffs Association.

78 4. The Suicide Prevention Action Network USA.

79 5. The Florida Initiative of Suicide Prevention.

80 6. The Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition.

81 7. The Alzheimer's Association.

82 8. The Florida School Board Association.

83 9. Volunteer Florida.

84 10. The state chapter of AARP.

85 11. The Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association.

86 12. The Florida Council for Community Mental Health.

87 13. The Florida Counseling Association.

583-01217A-10

20107032

88 14. NAMI Florida.

89 (b) The following state officials or their designees shall
90 serve on the coordinating council:

91 1. The Secretary of Elderly Affairs.

92 2. The State Surgeon General.

93 3. The Commissioner of Education.

94 4. The Secretary of Health Care Administration.

95 5. The Secretary of Juvenile Justice.

96 6. The Secretary of Corrections.

97 7. The executive director of the Department of Law
98 Enforcement.

99 8. The executive director of the Department of Veterans'
100 Affairs.

101 9. The Secretary of Children and Family Services.

102 10. The director of the Agency for Workforce Innovation.

103 (c) The Governor shall appoint five ~~four~~ additional members
104 to the coordinating council. At least four of the appointees
105 must have expertise that is critical to the prevention of
106 suicide or represent an organization that is not already
107 represented on the coordinating council. At least one of the
108 appointees must be a veteran.

109 (d) For the members appointed by the director of the Office
110 of Drug Control, seven members shall be appointed to initial
111 terms of 3 years, and seven members shall be appointed to
112 initial terms of 4 years. For the members appointed by the
113 Governor, three ~~two~~ members shall be appointed to initial terms
114 of 4 years, and two members shall be appointed to initial terms
115 of 3 years. Thereafter, such members shall be appointed to terms
116 of 4 years. Any vacancy on the coordinating council shall be

583-01217A-10

20107032

117 filled in the same manner as the original appointment, and any
118 member who is appointed to fill a vacancy occurring because of
119 death, resignation, or ineligibility for membership shall serve
120 only for the unexpired term of the member's predecessor. A
121 member is eligible for reappointment.

122 (e) The director of the Office of Drug Control shall be a
123 nonvoting member of the coordinating council and shall act as
124 chair.

125 (f) Members of the coordinating council shall serve without
126 compensation. Any member of the coordinating council who is a
127 public employee is entitled to reimbursement for per diem and
128 travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

129 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2010.