

**No. R-66. House concurrent resolution designating February 16, 2017 as Suicide Prevention Awareness Day in Vermont.**

(H.C.R.43)

Offered by: Representatives Donahue of Northfield, Ainsworth of Royalton, Bancroft of Westford, Baser of Bristol, Batchelor of Derby, Brennan of Colchester, Briglin of Thetford, Browning of Arlington, Burditt of West Rutland, Canfield of Fair Haven, Christensen of Weathersfield, Condon of Colchester, Connor of Fairfield, Copeland-Hanzas of Bradford, Cupoli of Rutland City, Devereux of Mount Holly, Dickinson of St. Albans Town, Dunn of Essex, Frenier of Chelsea, Gage of Rutland City, Gonzalez of Winooski, Graham of Williamstown, Hebert of Vernon, Higley of Lowell, Hooper of Montpelier, Hooper of Brookfield, Houghton of Essex, Jickling of Brookfield, LaClair of Barre Town, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lawrence of Lyndon, Lefebvre of Newark, Lewis of Berlin, Lippert of Hinesburg, Lucke of Hartford, Macaig of Williston, Masland of Thetford, McCoy of Poultney, McFaun of Barre Town, Morrissey of Bennington, Murphy of Fairfax, Myers of Essex, Nolan of Morristown, Parent of St. Albans Town, Poirier of Barre City, Potter of Clarendon, Pugh of South Burlington, Quimby of Concord, Rachelson of Burlington, Savage of Swanton, Scheu of Middlebury, Shaw of Pittsford, Sheldon of Middlebury, Smith of Derby, Smith of New Haven, Strong of Albany, Sullivan of Burlington, Tate of Mendon, Till of Jericho, Toleno of Brattleboro, Townsend of South Burlington, Trieber of Rockingham, Troiano of Stannard, Van Wyck of Ferrisburgh, Walz of Barre City, Willhoit of St. Johnsbury, Wood of Waterbury, Yacovone of Morristown, and Young of Glover

Offered by: Senators Ayer, Nitka, and White

Whereas, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention reports that suicide is the nation's 10th leading cause of death and that in 2015, 44,193 Americans died as a result of suicide, and

Whereas, data for the years 2013 and 2014 documented that 112 and 124 deaths as a result of suicide, respectively, occurred in Vermont, which is a major increase from the 85 confirmed deaths as a result of suicide in the State during 2012 and is significantly above the national average, and

Whereas, as a step toward decreasing this unacceptably high number of Vermont deaths as a result of suicide, in 2013, the Vermont Suicide Prevention Data Group (VSPDG) was formed as a collaboration involving State agencies, nonprofit organizations, and academic partners engaged in suicide prevention activities, and

Whereas, the VSPDG works across State agencies to improve the data collection and reporting process, and

Whereas, VSPDG is identifying trends in suicide-related behavior, and

Whereas, a resulting benefit of the collaboration is a data source for suicide prevention researchers, and

Whereas, the important data resulting from VSPDG's efforts is useful for the establishment and evaluation of suicide prevention programs and policies, including the drafting of research funding proposals, and

Whereas, specific results of VSPDG work include the development of data briefs at the Department of Health, improved suicide prevention services for veterans, and contributing to child safety, self-harm, and firearms-related suicide prevention projects, and

Whereas, there are more than 35 State member or contributing organizations and Sally Kerschner RN, the Coordinator of Maternal Child Health Planning and Programming at the Department of Health facilitates the group's projects, and

Whereas, VSPDG participants are visiting the State House today to inform legislators of its collaborative's life-saving work, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly designates February 16, 2017 as Suicide Prevention Awareness Day at the State House, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Vermont Suicide Prevention Center.