

No. R-326. House concurrent resolution recognizing the importance of the Vermont Umatter suicide prevention program.

(H.C.R.231)

Offered by: Representatives Cole of Burlington, Bartholomew of Hartland, Bissonnette of Winooski, Brennan of Colchester, Buxton of Tunbridge, Conquest of Newbury, Corcoran of Bennington, Donaghy of Poultney, Evans of Essex, Fay of St. Johnsbury, Gallivan of Chittenden, Goodwin of Weston, Grad of Moretown, Hooper of Montpelier, Jerman of Essex, Jewett of Ripton, Koch of Barre Town, Komline of Dorset, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lippert of Hinesburg, Malcolm of Pawlet, McCarthy of St. Albans City, McFaun of Barre Town, Mrowicki of Putney, Partridge of Windham, Potter of Clarendon, Ralston of Middlebury, Russell of Rutland City, Savage of Swanton, Strong of Albany, Taylor of Barre City, Van Wyck of Ferrisburgh, Waite-Simpson of Essex, Webb of Shelburne, Wizowaty of Burlington, and Wright of Burlington

Offered by: Senators Baruth, Flory, Rodgers, and Zuckerman

Whereas, suicide is a serious mental health concern meriting special societal focus, and

Whereas, Umatter is an innovative suicide prevention program, and

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the third leading cause of death in the United States among persons between the ages of 10 to 24, and

Whereas, Umatter is based on the concept of multiple levels of suicide prevention starting with family and extending outward to friends, the community, and finally the larger society defined as the big picture, and

Whereas, the Vermont Suicide Prevention Coalition (VSPC), which implements Umatter, in association with the Center for Health and Learning, consists of representatives from public health, mental health, education, and youth leadership organizations, suicide advocacy prevention groups, Vermont 2-1-1, and suicide survivors, and

Whereas, the VSPC was established with financing from a federal Youth Suicide Prevention Grant, and its mission is to “create communities of hope throughout Vermont in which schools, agencies and people of all ages” are able to respond to instances of suicidal behavior, and

Whereas, VSPC is starting with the premise that suicide, regardless of the age group, is preventable, and

Whereas, among specific goals for the VSPC are increasing public awareness of the importance of addressing mental health issues, establishing a broad-based suicide prevention program in Vermont, sponsoring a social media campaign to reduce the stigma associated with using mental health services, and creating a five-year strategic plan to develop suicide prevention and early intervention programs, and

Whereas, Umatter also addresses short-term crisis scenarios urging individuals under stress to call 911, a local crisis hotline, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, or go to the nearest emergency room, and

Whereas, members of the Vermont Suicide Prevention Council are gathered today, February 14, 2014, at the State House to inform the General Assembly about the importance of suicide prevention education, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recognizes the importance of the Vermont Umatter suicide prevention program, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Nicole Miller at the Center for Health and Learning.