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P.L. 2003, CHAPTER 214, *approved January 9, 2004*
Senate, No. 1515 (*Third Reprint*)

1 AN ACT concerning suicide, supplementing Title 30 of the Revised
2 Statutes¹[,] and¹ repealing section 6 of P.L.1985, c.195 ¹[, and
3 making an appropriation]¹.

4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7

8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. Overall, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death for all
10 Americans and the third leading cause of death for young people ages
11 15 to 24. ¹[Suicide took the lives of 30,535 Americans in 1997. This
12 number is over 50% higher than the number of homicides reported
13 nationwide for that same year. Nearly 500,000 people require
14 emergency room treatment each year as a result of an attempted
15 suicide.]¹

16 b. During the period from 1952 to 1995, the incidence of suicide
17 among adolescents and young adults nearly tripled. During the period
18 from 1980 to 1997, the rate of suicide among persons ages 15 to 19
19 increased by 11% and among persons ages 10 to 14 by 109%.
20 Although suicide among young children is a rare event, the dramatic
21 increase in the rate among persons ages 10 to 14 underscores the
22 urgent need for intensifying efforts to prevent suicide among persons
23 in this age group. It is also widely reported that the risk for attempted
24 or completed suicide varies with race, religion, age and sexual identity.

25 c. In 1996, 72 persons under the age of 25 committed suicide in
26 New Jersey, and every month at least 127 young people in this State
27 attempt suicide. Over 40% of the suicide attempts of minors are
28 second or subsequent attempts. Non-fatal suicide attempts outnumber
29 suicide death and often result in significant medical and economic
30 costs, and in physical, emotional and psychological damage. Like
31 suicide deaths, however, suicide attempts are generally under-
32 reported.

33 d. It is estimated that fewer than 25% of suicide attempts are
34 reported. When they are reported, the reaction often makes the person
35 less likely to seek further help. Suicide evokes complicated and
36 uncomfortable reactions that stigmatize the survivors and increase
37 their burden of hurt, isolation and secrecy. This secrecy also tends to

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Senate SHH committee amendments adopted June 13, 2002.

² Senate floor amendments adopted September 12, 2002.

³ Assembly AFW committee amendments adopted February 6, 2003.

1 diminish the accuracy and amount of information available about
2 persons who have attempted or completed suicides, which information
3 could help suicide prevention efforts.

4 e. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a program in this State to:
5 collect information about ¹[those] youths¹ who attempt suicide and
6 improve the information available to both professionals, who are in
7 contact with ¹[persons] youth¹ at risk of suicide, and ¹[individuals
8 and]¹ families at risk; identify and provide suitable intervention
9 services to reduce the incidence of suicide; and educate
10 ¹[children] youths¹ and families at risk about the resources available
11 for suicide prevention and intervention.

12
13 2. As used in this act:

14 ²"Alcohol and drug counselor" means a person who is a certified
15 alcohol and drug counselor or a licensed clinical alcohol and drug
16 counselor pursuant to P.L.1997, c.331 (C.45:2D-1 et seq.).²

17 "Attempted suicide" means destructive behavior intended by the
18 actor to result in the actor's harm or death.

19 "Certified Domestic Violence Specialist" means a person who has
20 fulfilled the requirements of certification as a Domestic Violence
21 Specialist established by the New Jersey Association of Domestic
22 Violence Professionals.

23 "Completed suicide" means a death that is known or reasonably
24 suspected to have resulted from an intentional act of the deceased,
25 regardless of whether it has been ruled a suicide by a medical
26 examiner.

27 "Council" means the New Jersey ¹Youth¹ Suicide Prevention
28 Advisory Council established pursuant to this act.

29 "Division" means the Division of Mental Health Services in the
30 Department of Human Services.

31 ²["Substance abuse counselor" means a person who is certified by
32 an appropriate professional organization to provide substance abuse
33 counseling for the prevention of substance abuse, including alcohol
34 abuse.]²

35 "Teaching staff member" means a member of the professional staff
36 of any school district, regional board of education or the board of
37 trustees of a charter school, or any board of education of a county
38 vocational school, who holds an office, position or employment of
39 such character that the qualifications for the office, position or
40 employment require the member to hold a valid and effective standard,
41 provisional or emergency certificate, appropriate to the member's
42 office, position or employment, issued by the State Board of
43 Examiners. Teaching staff member includes a school nurse and a
44 school athletic trainer.

45 ¹"Youth" means a person 24 years of age or younger.¹

46 3. a. Any teaching staff member, who, as a result of information
47 obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable

1 cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed
2 suicide, shall promptly report such information to the division in a
3 form and manner prescribed by the division.

4 b. A nonpublic school is encouraged to require any member of its
5 professional staff, who, as a result of information obtained in the
6 course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or
7 believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly
8 report such information to the division in a form and manner
9 prescribed by the division.

10 As used in this subsection, "nonpublic school" means an elementary
11 or secondary school within the State, other than a public school,
12 offering education in grades K-12 or any combination thereof, at
13 which a child may legally fulfill compulsory school attendance
14 requirements.

15 c. Any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family
16 therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant,
17 ²alcohol and drug counselor,² or registered nurse or licensed practical
18 nurse licensed in this State pursuant to Title 45 of the Revised
19 Statutes, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the
20 person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that
21 ¹[an individual] a youth¹ has attempted or completed suicide, shall
22 promptly report such information to the division in a form and manner
23 prescribed by the division.

24 d. Any public health official, probation officer, employee of the
25 Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part, ²[substance abuse
26 counselor,]² Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a
27 professional group identified by the council as having a likelihood to
28 know about suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of
29 information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has
30 reasonable cause to suspect or believe that ¹[an individual] a youth¹
31 has attempted or completed suicide, is encouraged to promptly report
32 such information to the division in a form and manner prescribed by
33 the division.

34 e. The reporting form established by the division shall not require
35 the reporter to identify the student or ¹[individual] youth¹ by name or
36 other unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-
37 identifying demographic information about the student or
38 ¹[individual] youth¹, other attempts made by the student or
39 ¹[individual] youth¹ and the response or referral made to deal with the
40 incident.

41 f. The reporting form shall be submitted to a designated employee
42 of the division with responsibility for compiling data from the reports.
43 Information contained in the reports shall not be considered a public
44 record, but the division may aggregate the data for the purpose of
45 preparing an annual report pursuant to section 6 of this act.

46 g. The division shall offer to provide persons who are required or

1 encouraged to report an attempted or completed suicide with current
2 information about public and private assistance available to survivors
3 and families of attempted and completed suicides and professionals
4 who deal with suicide.

5 h. The reporting of an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to
6 this section shall not replace or alter any other requirement of law or
7 professional standard or obligation that requires a person to evaluate
8 a death or report an attempted or completed suicide.

9 i. Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide
10 pursuant to this act shall have immunity from any civil or criminal
11 liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad
12 faith or with malicious purpose.

13 j. No provision of this act shall be deemed to require the disclosure
14 of, or penalize the failure to disclose, any information which would be
15 privileged pursuant to the provisions of sections 18 through 23,
16 inclusive, of P.L.1960, c.52 (C.2A:84A-18 through 2A:84A-23).

17

18 4. There is established in the Department of Human Services the
19 New Jersey ¹Youth¹ Suicide Prevention Advisory Council.

20 a. The purpose of the council shall be to: examine existing needs
21 and services and make recommendations to the division for ¹youth¹
22 suicide reporting, prevention and intervention¹ [, giving priority to
23 recommendations concerning prevention and education for children
24 and young adults]¹; advise the division on the content of informational
25 materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or
26 completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of
27 regulations required pursuant to this act.

28 b. The council shall consist of 17 members as follows:

29 (1) the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior
30 Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice
31 Commission established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.284 (C.52:17B-169
32 et seq.) and the chairman of the Community Mental Health Citizens
33 Advisory Board established pursuant to P.L.1957, c.146 (C.30:9A-1
34 et seq.), or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;

35 (2) six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one
36 person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory
37 board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide, one
38 person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school
39 teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local
40 board of education ², one psychiatrist² and ²[two persons] one
41 person² with professional experience in the collection and reporting
42 of social science data;

43 (3) three public members appointed by the President of the Senate,
44 no more than two of whom are members of the same political party,
45 ²[who] ³[two of whom² have] one of whom has³ volunteer or paid
46 experience in the provision of services to survivors of suicide or
47 ¹[people] youth¹ at risk of attempting suicide², ³[and]³ one of

1 whom is an alcohol and drug counselor^{2 3}, and one of whom is a
2 representative of the New Jersey Traumatic Loss Coalition³; and

3 (4) three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General
4 Assembly, no more than two of whom are members of the same
5 political party, ²[who each] ³[two of whom² have] one of whom
6 has³ knowledge of and interest in the prevention of ¹youth¹ suicide
7 and the provision of education about suicide to high-risk populations,
8 including ¹[children and young adults, senior citizens and]¹ religious,
9 racial, ethnic or sexual minorities^{2, 3}[and]³ one of whom is a
10 pediatrician^{2 3}, and one of whom is a school-based counselor³.

11 c. The public members shall be appointed no later than 60 days
12 after the date of enactment of this act.

13 d. The public members shall serve for a term of five years; but, of
14 the members first appointed, three shall serve for a term of two years,
15 three for a term of three years, three for a term of four years and three
16 for a term of five years. Members are eligible for reappointment upon
17 the expiration of their terms. Vacancies in the membership of the
18 council shall be filled in the same manner provided for the original
19 appointments.

20 e. The council shall organize as soon as practicable following the
21 appointment of its members and shall select a chairperson and vice-
22 chairperson from among the members. The chairperson shall appoint
23 a secretary who need not be a member of the council.

24 f. The public members shall serve without compensation, but shall
25 be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of
26 their duties and within the limits of funds available to the council.

27 g. The council shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail
28 itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or
29 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may
30 require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

31 h. The Department of Human Services shall provide staff support
32 to the council.

33

34 5. The Commissioner of Human Services shall develop and
35 publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness
36 campaign on ¹youth¹ suicide prevention and intervention, the goals of
37 which shall be to:

38 a. increase voluntary reporting of ¹youth¹ suicides and attempts at
39 suicide by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and
40 attempts in the course of their employment;

41 b. increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services
42 available to ¹[people] youths¹ who contemplate or attempt suicide;

43 c. increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of ¹youth¹
44 suicide attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with
45 depression and suicide; and

46 d. encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public
47 and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce

1 the incidence of attempted and completed suicides ¹by youths¹.

2

3 6. a. The division shall compile data about reported attempted and
4 completed suicides by ¹[youth] youths¹ in the State, without
5 identifying any individuals involved.

6 b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall issue a report
7 annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing
8 a summary of the data compiled by the division that includes aggregate
9 demographic information about ¹[youth] youths ¹ who attempt or
10 complete suicide. The report shall include any recommendations for
11 legislation or regulatory changes that would aid in the collection of
12 more accurate data or the provision of more effective suicide
13 prevention and intervention.

14 c. The commissioner shall provide specific findings about youth
15 suicides and attempts to the council, as soon as possible, to assist the
16 council in fulfilling its responsibility under this act to make
17 recommendations about ¹youth¹ suicide prevention and intervention
18 ¹[within that population]¹.

19

20 7. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the
21 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
22 seq.), shall adopt regulations to carry out the purposes of this act.

23

24 8. Section 6 of P.L.1985, c.195 (C.30:9A-17) is repealed.

25

26 ¹[9. There is appropriated \$400,000 from the General Fund to the
27 Department of Human Services to carry out the purposes of this act.]¹

28

29 ¹[10.] 9.¹ This act shall take effect immediately.

30

31

32

33

34 _____
35 Requires reporting by certain persons of attempted or completed
36 suicides by youth and establishes NJ Youth Suicide Prevention
Advisory Council.

SENATE, No. 1515

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 210th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 13, 2002

Sponsored by:

Senator PETER A. INVERSO

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires reporting by certain persons of attempted or completed suicides, establishes NJ Suicide Prevention Advisory Council; appropriates \$400,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



S1515 INVERSO

1 AN ACT concerning suicide, supplementing Title 30 of the Revised
2 Statutes, repealing section 6 of P.L.1985, c.195, and making an
3 appropriation.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. Overall, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death for all
10 Americans and the third leading cause of death for young people ages
11 15 to 24. Suicide took the lives of 30,535 Americans in 1997. This
12 number is over 50% higher than the number of homicides reported
13 nationwide for that same year. Nearly 500,000 people require
14 emergency room treatment each year as a result of an attempted
15 suicide.

16 b. During the period from 1952 to 1995, the incidence of suicide
17 among adolescents and young adults nearly tripled. During the period
18 from 1980 to 1997, the rate of suicide among persons ages 15 to 19
19 increased by 11% and among persons ages 10 to 14 by 109%.
20 Although suicide among young children is a rare event, the dramatic
21 increase in the rate among persons ages 10 to 14 underscores the
22 urgent need for intensifying efforts to prevent suicide among persons
23 in this age group. It is also widely reported that the risk for attempted
24 or completed suicide varies with race, religion, age and sexual identity.

25 c. In 1996, 72 persons under the age of 25 committed suicide in
26 New Jersey, and every month at least 127 young people in this State
27 attempt suicide. Over 40% of the suicide attempts of minors are
28 second or subsequent attempts. Non-fatal suicide attempts outnumber
29 suicide death and often result in significant medical and economic
30 costs, and in physical, emotional and psychological damage. Like
31 suicide deaths, however, suicide attempts are generally under-
32 reported.

33 d. It is estimated that fewer than 25% of suicide attempts are
34 reported. When they are reported, the reaction often makes the person
35 less likely to seek further help. Suicide evokes complicated and
36 uncomfortable reactions that stigmatize the survivors and increase
37 their burden of hurt, isolation and secrecy. This secrecy also tends to
38 diminish the accuracy and amount of information available about
39 persons who have attempted or completed suicides, which information
40 could help suicide prevention efforts.

41 e. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a program in this State to:
42 collect information about those who attempt suicide and improve the
43 information available to both professionals, who are in contact with
44 persons at risk of suicide, and individuals and families at risk; identify
45 and provide suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of
46 suicide; and educate children and families at risk about the resources

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1 available for suicide prevention and intervention.

2

3 2. As used in this act:

4 "Attempted suicide" means destructive behavior intended by the
5 actor to result in the actor's harm or death.

6 "Certified Domestic Violence Specialist" means a person who has
7 fulfilled the requirements of certification as a Domestic Violence
8 Specialist established by the New Jersey Association of Domestic
9 Violence Professionals.

10 "Completed suicide" means a death that is known or reasonably
11 suspected to have resulted from an intentional act of the deceased,
12 regardless of whether it has been ruled a suicide by a medical
13 examiner.

14 "Council" means the New Jersey Suicide Prevention Advisory
15 Council established pursuant to this act.

16 "Division" means the Division of Mental Health Services in the
17 Department of Human Services.

18 "Substance abuse counselor" means a person who is certified by an
19 appropriate professional organization to provide substance abuse
20 counseling for the prevention of substance abuse, including alcohol
21 abuse.

22 "Teaching staff member" means a member of the professional staff
23 of any school district, regional board of education or the board of
24 trustees of a charter school, or any board of education of a county
25 vocational school, who holds an office, position or employment of
26 such character that the qualifications for the office, position or
27 employment require the member to hold a valid and effective standard,
28 provisional or emergency certificate, appropriate to the member's
29 office, position or employment, issued by the State Board of
30 Examiners. Teaching staff member includes a school nurse and a
31 school athletic trainer.

32

33 3. a. Any teaching staff member, who, as a result of information
34 obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable
35 cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed
36 suicide, shall promptly report such information to the division in a
37 form and manner prescribed by the division.

38 b. A nonpublic school is encouraged to require any member of its
39 professional staff, who, as a result of information obtained in the
40 course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or
41 believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly
42 report such information to the division in a form and manner
43 prescribed by the division.

44 As used in this subsection, "nonpublic school" means an elementary
45 or secondary school within the State, other than a public school,
46 offering education in grades K-12 or any combination thereof, at

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1 which a child may legally fulfill compulsory school attendance
2 requirements.

3 c. Any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family
4 therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant, or
5 registered nurse or licensed practical nurse licensed in this State
6 pursuant to Title 45 of the Revised Statutes, who, as a result of
7 information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has
8 reasonable cause to suspect or believe that an individual has attempted
9 or completed suicide, shall promptly report such information to the
10 division in a form and manner prescribed by the division.

11 d. Any public health official, probation officer, employee of the
12 Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part, substance abuse
13 counselor, Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a
14 professional group identified by the council as having a likelihood to
15 know about suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of
16 information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has
17 reasonable cause to suspect or believe that an individual has attempted
18 or completed suicide, is encouraged to promptly report such
19 information to the division in a form and manner prescribed by the
20 division.

21 e. The reporting form established by the division shall not require
22 the reporter to identify the student or individual by name or other
23 unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-
24 identifying demographic information about the student or individual,
25 other attempts made by the student or individual and the response or
26 referral made to deal with the incident.

27 f. The reporting form shall be submitted to a designated employee
28 of the division with responsibility for compiling data from the reports.
29 Information contained in the reports shall not be considered a public
30 record, but the division may aggregate the data for the purpose of
31 preparing an annual report pursuant to section 6 of this act.

32 g. The division shall offer to provide persons who are required or
33 encouraged to report an attempted or completed suicide with current
34 information about public and private assistance available to survivors
35 and families of attempted and completed suicides and professionals
36 who deal with suicide.

37 h. The reporting of an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to
38 this section shall not replace or alter any other requirement of law or
39 professional standard or obligation that requires a person to evaluate
40 a death or report an attempted or completed suicide.

41 i. Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide
42 pursuant to this act shall have immunity from any civil or criminal
43 liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad
44 faith or with malicious purpose.

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1 j. No provision of this act shall be deemed to require the disclosure
2 of, or penalize the failure to disclose, any information which would be
3 privileged pursuant to the provisions of sections 18 through 23,
4 inclusive, of P.L.1960, c.52 (C.2A:84A-18 through 2A:84A-23).

5
6 4. There is established in the Department of Human Services the
7 New Jersey Suicide Prevention Advisory Council.

8 a. The purpose of the council shall be to: examine existing needs
9 and services and make recommendations to the division for suicide
10 reporting, prevention and intervention, giving priority to
11 recommendations concerning prevention and education for children
12 and young adults; advise the division on the content of informational
13 materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or
14 completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of
15 regulations required pursuant to this act.

16 b. The council shall consist of 17 members as follows:

17 (1) the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior
18 Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice
19 Commission established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.284 (C.52:17B-169
20 et seq.) and the chairman of the Community Mental Health Citizens
21 Advisory Board established pursuant to P.L.1957, c.146 (C.30:9A-1
22 et seq.), or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;

23 (2) six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one
24 person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory
25 board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide, one
26 person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school
27 teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local
28 board of education and two persons with professional experience in
29 the collection and reporting of social science data;

30 (3) three public members appointed by the President of the Senate,
31 no more than two of whom are members of the same political party,
32 who have volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to
33 survivors of suicide or people at risk of attempting suicide; and

34 (4) three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General
35 Assembly, no more than two of whom are members of the same
36 political party, who each have knowledge of and interest in the
37 prevention of suicide and the provision of education about suicide to
38 high-risk populations, including children and young adults, senior
39 citizens and religious, racial, ethnic or sexual minorities.

40 c. The public members shall be appointed no later than 60 days after
41 the date of enactment of this act.

42 d. The public members shall serve for a term of five years; but, of
43 the members first appointed, three shall serve for a term of two years,
44 three for a term of three years, three for a term of four years and three
45 for a term of five years. Members are eligible for reappointment upon
46 the expiration of their terms. Vacancies in the membership of the

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1 council shall be filled in the same manner provided for the original
2 appointments.

3 e. The council shall organize as soon as practicable following the
4 appointment of its members and shall select a chairperson and vice-
5 chairperson from among the members. The chairperson shall appoint
6 a secretary who need not be a member of the council.

7 f. The public members shall serve without compensation, but shall
8 be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of
9 their duties and within the limits of funds available to the council.

10 g. The council shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail
11 itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or
12 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may
13 require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

14 h. The Department of Human Services shall provide staff support
15 to the council.

16

17 5. The Commissioner of Human Services shall develop and
18 publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness
19 campaign on suicide prevention and intervention, the goals of which
20 shall be to:

21 a. increase voluntary reporting of suicides and attempts at suicide
22 by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and attempts in the
23 course of their employment;

24 b. increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services
25 available to people who contemplate or attempt suicide;

26 c. increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of suicide
27 attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with depression
28 and suicide; and

29 d. encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public
30 and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce
31 the incidence of attempted and completed suicides.

32

33 6. a. The division shall compile data about reported attempted and
34 completed suicides by youth in the State, without identifying any
35 individuals involved.

36 b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall issue a report
37 annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing
38 a summary of the data compiled by the division that includes aggregate
39 demographic information about youth who attempt or complete
40 suicide. The report shall include any recommendations for legislation
41 or regulatory changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate
42 data or the provision of more effective suicide prevention and
43 intervention.

44 c. The commissioner shall provide specific findings about youth
45 suicides and attempts to the council, as soon as possible, to assist the
46 council in fulfilling its responsibility under this act to make

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1 recommendations about suicide prevention and intervention within that
2 population.

3

4 7. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the
5 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
6 seq.), shall adopt regulations to carry out the purposes of this act.

7

8 8. Section 6 of P.L.1985, c.195 (C.30:9A-17) is repealed.

9

10 9. There is appropriated \$400,000 from the General Fund to the
11 Department of Human Services to carry out the purposes of this act.

12

13 10. This act shall take effect immediately.

14

15

16

STATEMENT

17

18 This bill establishes a suicide prevention and reporting program in
19 the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human
20 Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect information about
21 those who attempt suicide and improve the information available to
22 both professionals, who are in contact with persons at risk of suicide,
23 and individuals and families at risk; identify and provide suitable
24 intervention services to reduce the incidence of suicide; and educate
25 children and families at risk about the resources available for suicide
26 prevention and intervention.

27 With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides,
28 the bill:

29 C requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who, as a
30 result of information obtained in the course of the person's
31 employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a
32 student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the
33 information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The bill also
34 encourages a nonpublic school to require any member of its
35 professional staff to make these reports;

36 C requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and
37 family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician
38 assistant, or registered or licensed practical nurse in this State, who,
39 as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's
40 employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a
41 person has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the
42 information to the division; and

43 C encourages any public health official, probation officer, employee
44 of the Family Court, substance abuse counselor, Certified Domestic
45 Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified
46 by the New Jersey Suicide Prevention Advisory Council

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1 (established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know about
2 suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of information
3 obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable
4 cause to suspect or believe that a person has attempted or
5 completed suicide, to report the information to the division.

6 The reporting form established by the division, pursuant to this bill,
7 shall not require the reporter to identify the person by name or other
8 unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-
9 identifying demographic information about the person, other attempts
10 made by the person and the response or referral made to deal with the
11 incident. Also, the bill requires the division to offer to provide persons
12 who are required or encouraged to report an attempted or completed
13 suicide with current information about public and private assistance
14 available to survivors and families of attempted and completed suicides
15 and professionals who deal with suicide.

16 Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide
17 pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal
18 liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad
19 faith or with malicious purpose.

20 The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Suicide Prevention
21 Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services. The purpose
22 of the council is to: examine existing needs and services and make
23 recommendations to the division for suicide reporting, prevention and
24 intervention, giving priority to recommendations concerning
25 prevention and education for children and young adults; advise the
26 division on the content of informational materials to be made available
27 to persons who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the
28 division in the development of regulations required pursuant to this
29 bill.

30 The members of the council shall include:

31 C the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior Services,
32 and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice
33 Commission and the chairman of the Community Mental Health
34 Citizens Advisory Board, or their designees, who shall serve ex
35 officio;

36 C six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one
37 person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory
38 board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide,
39 one person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school
40 teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local
41 board of education and two persons with professional experience
42 in the collection and reporting of social science data;

43 C three public members appointed by the President of the Senate who
44 have volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to
45 survivors of suicide or people at risk of attempting suicide; and

46 C three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General

S1515 INVERSO

1 Assembly who each have knowledge of and interest in the
2 prevention of suicide and the provision of education about suicide
3 to high-risk populations, including children and young adults, senior
4 citizens and religious, racial, ethnic or sexual minorities.

5 The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to
6 develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public
7 awareness campaign on suicide prevention and intervention, the goals
8 of which shall be to:

9 - increase voluntary reporting of suicides and attempts at suicide
10 by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and attempts in the
11 course of their employment;

12 - increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services
13 available to people who contemplate or attempt suicide;

14 - increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of suicide
15 attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with depression
16 and suicide; and

17 - encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public
18 and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce
19 the incidence of attempted and completed suicides.

20 The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data
21 about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the
22 State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner
23 of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council,
24 the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data
25 compiled by the division that includes aggregate demographic
26 information about youth who attempt or complete suicide. The report
27 shall include any recommendations for legislation or regulatory
28 changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate data or the
29 provision of more effective suicide prevention and intervention.

30 The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth
31 Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of
32 that council is completed.

33 Finally, the bill appropriates \$400,000 from the General Fund to the
34 Department of Human Services to carry out the purposes of the bill.

ASSEMBLY FAMILY, WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[Second Reprint]
SENATE, No. 1515

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 6, 2003

The Assembly Family, Women and Children's Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1515 (2R).

As amended by the committee, this bill establishes a youth suicide prevention and reporting program in the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect information about those youth who attempt suicide and improve the information available to both professionals, who are in contact with youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of youth suicide; and educate youth and families at risk about the resources available for suicide prevention and intervention.

With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides by youth, the bill:

- ! requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The bill also encourages a nonpublic school to require any member of its professional staff to make these reports;
- ! requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant, alcohol and drug counselor, or registered or licensed practical nurse in this State, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the division; and
- ! encourages any public health official, probation officer, employee of the Family Court, Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by the

New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council (established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know about youth suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to report the information to the division.

The reporting form established by the division, pursuant to this bill, shall not require the reporter to identify the person by name or other unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-identifying demographic information about the person, other attempts made by the person and the response or referral made to deal with the incident. Also, the bill requires the division to offer to provide persons who are required or encouraged to report an attempted or completed suicide with current information about public and private assistance available to survivors and families of attempted and completed suicides and professionals who deal with suicide.

Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the council is to: examine existing needs and services and make recommendations to the division for youth suicide reporting, prevention and intervention; advise the division on the content of informational materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of regulations required pursuant to this bill.

The members of the council shall include:

- ! the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice Commission and the chairman of the Community Mental Health Citizens Advisory Board, or their designees, who shall serve *ex officio*;
- ! six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide, one person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local board of education, one psychiatrist and one person with professional experience in the collection and reporting of social science data;
- ! three public members appointed by the President of the Senate, one of whom has volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of attempting suicide, one of whom is an alcohol and drug counselor, and one of whom is a representative of the New

Jersey Traumatic Loss Coalition; and

- ! three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, one of whom has knowledge of and interest in the prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education about suicide to high-risk populations, including religious, racial, ethnic or sexual minorities, one of whom is a pediatrician, and one of whom is a school-based counselor.

The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention, the goals of which shall be to:

- ! increase voluntary reporting of youth suicides and attempts at suicide by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and attempts in the course of their employment;
- ! increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services available to youths who contemplate or attempt suicide;
- ! increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of youth suicide attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with depression and suicide; and
- ! encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce the incidence of attempted and completed suicides by youths.

The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data compiled by the division, which includes aggregate demographic information about youth who attempt or complete suicide. The report shall include any recommendations for legislation or regulatory changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate data or the provision of more effective youth suicide prevention and intervention.

The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of that council is completed.

This bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3035 Aca (Previte/Burzichelli), which was also reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to replace the public member appointed to the advisory council who has:

- ! volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of attempting suicide with a representative of the New Jersey Traumatic Loss Coalition; and

- ! knowledge of and interest in the prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education about suicide to high-risk populations with a school-based counselor.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[Third Reprint]

SENATE, No. 1515

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 20, 2003

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1515 (3R).

Senate Bill No. 1515 (3R) establishes a youth suicide prevention and reporting program in the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect information about those youth who attempt suicide and improve the information available to both professionals, who are in contact with youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of youth suicide; and educate youth and families at risk about the resources available for suicide prevention and intervention.

With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides by youth, the bill:

- ! requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The bill also encourages a nonpublic school to require any member of its professional staff to make these reports;
- ! requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant, alcohol and drug counselor, or registered or licensed practical nurse in this State, who, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the division; and
- ! encourages any public health official, probation officer, employee of the Family Court, Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council (established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know about youth suicide attempts and deaths, who, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to report the information to the division.

Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal

liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the council is to: examine existing needs and services and make recommendations to the division for youth suicide reporting, prevention and intervention; advise the division on the content of informational materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of regulations required pursuant to this bill.

The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention.

The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data compiled by the division.

The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of that council is completed.

As reported, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3035 (1R) as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill was not certified as requiring a fiscal note.

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1515

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 13, 2002

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1515.

As amended by committee, this bill establishes a youth suicide prevention and reporting program in the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect information about those youth who attempt suicide and improve the information available to both professionals, who are in contact with youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of youth suicide; and educate youth and families at risk about the resources available for suicide prevention and intervention.

With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides by youth, the bill:

- C requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The bill also encourages a nonpublic school to require any member of its professional staff to make these reports;
- C requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant, or registered or licensed practical nurse in this State, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the division; and
- C encourages any public health official, probation officer, employee of the Family Court, substance abuse counselor, Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council (established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know

about youth suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to report the information to the division.

The reporting form established by the division, pursuant to this bill, shall not require the reporter to identify the person by name or other unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-identifying demographic information about the person, other attempts made by the person and the response or referral made to deal with the incident. Also, the bill requires the division to offer to provide persons who are required or encouraged to report an attempted or completed suicide with current information about public and private assistance available to survivors and families of attempted and completed suicides and professionals who deal with suicide.

Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the council is to: examine existing needs and services and make recommendations to the division for youth suicide reporting, prevention and intervention; advise the division on the content of informational materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of regulations required pursuant to this bill.

The members of the council shall include:

- C the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice Commission and the chairman of the Community Mental Health Citizens Advisory Board, or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;
- C six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide, one person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local board of education and two persons with professional experience in the collection and reporting of social science data;
- C three public members appointed by the President of the Senate who have volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of attempting suicide; and
- C three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly who each have knowledge of and interest in the prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education about suicide to high-risk populations, including religious, racial, ethnic or sexual minorities.

The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention, the goals of which shall be to:

- increase voluntary reporting of youth suicides and attempts at suicide by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and attempts in the course of their employment;
- increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services available to youths who contemplate or attempt suicide;
- increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of youth suicide attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with depression and suicide; and
- encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce the incidence of attempted and completed suicides by youths.

The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data compiled by the division, which includes aggregate demographic information about youth who attempt or complete suicide. The report shall include any recommendations for legislation or regulatory changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate data or the provision of more effective youth suicide prevention and intervention.

The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of that council is completed.

The committee amended the bill to limit its provisions to youth ages 24 years and younger, rather than persons of any age. The amendments also delete the \$400,000 appropriation in the bill.

STATEMENT TO
[First Reprint]
SENATE, No. 1515

with Senate Floor Amendments
(Proposed By Senator Inverso)

ADOPTED: SEPTEMBER 12, 2002

These amendments make changes to the appointed members of the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council, established in this bill. The amendments specify that the members shall include a psychiatrist appointed by the Governor, a certified or licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselor appointed by the Senate President, and a pediatrician appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

The amendments also delete the definition of "substance abuse counselor," and replace it with the term "alcohol and drug counselor," which is defined as a person who is a certified alcohol and drug counselor or a licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselor pursuant to N.J.S.A.45:2D-1 et seq.

ASSEMBLY, No. 3035

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 210th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 25, 2002

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman MARY T. PREVITE

District 6 (Camden)

Assemblyman JOHN J. BURZICHELLI

District 3 (Salem, Cumberland and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:

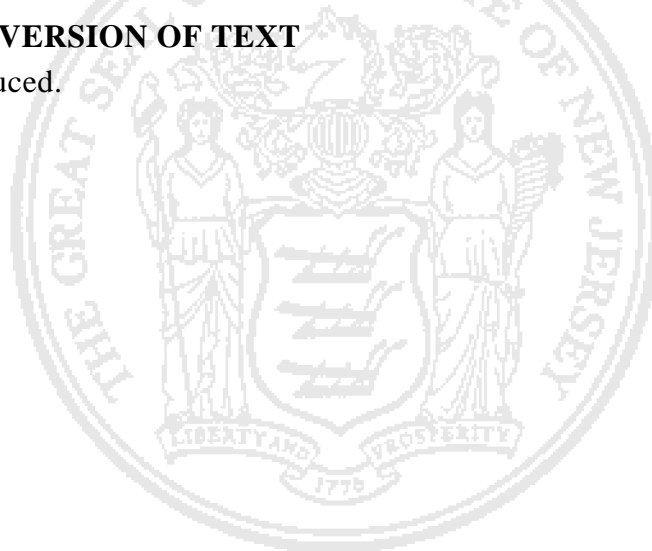
**Assemblymen Greenwald, R.Smith, Assemblywoman Cruz-Perez,
Assemblymen Sarlo, Ahearn, Assemblywomen Perez-Cinciarelli, Quigley,
Assemblymen Fraguera, Van Drew, Fisher, Doria, Blee, Assemblywoman
Greenstein, Assemblymen Guear, Eagler and Gusciora**

SYNOPSIS

Requires reporting by certain persons of attempted or completed suicides by youth and establishes NJ Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/7/2003)

1 AN ACT concerning suicide, supplementing Title 30 of the Revised
2 Statutes and repealing section 6 of P.L.1985, c.195.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. Overall, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death for all
9 Americans and the third leading cause of death for young people ages
10 15 to 24.

11 b. During the period from 1952 to 1995, the incidence of suicide
12 among adolescents and young adults nearly tripled. During the period
13 from 1980 to 1997, the rate of suicide among persons ages 15 to 19
14 increased by 11% and among persons ages 10 to 14 by 109%.
15 Although suicide among young children is a rare event, the dramatic
16 increase in the rate among persons ages 10 to 14 underscores the
17 urgent need for intensifying efforts to prevent suicide among persons
18 in this age group. It is also widely reported that the risk for attempted
19 or completed suicide varies with race, religion, age and sexual identity.

20 c. In 1996, 72 persons under the age of 25 committed suicide in
21 New Jersey, and every month at least 127 young people in this State
22 attempt suicide. Over 40% of the suicide attempts of minors are
23 second or subsequent attempts. Non-fatal suicide attempts outnumber
24 suicide death and often result in significant medical and economic
25 costs, and in physical, emotional and psychological damage. Like
26 suicide deaths, however, suicide attempts are generally under-
27 reported.

28 d. It is estimated that fewer than 25% of suicide attempts are
29 reported. When they are reported, the reaction often makes the person
30 less likely to seek further help. Suicide evokes complicated and
31 uncomfortable reactions that stigmatize the survivors and increase
32 their burden of hurt, isolation and secrecy. This secrecy also tends to
33 diminish the accuracy and amount of information available about
34 persons who have attempted or completed suicides, which information
35 could help suicide prevention efforts.

36 e. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a program in this State to:
37 collect information about youths who attempt suicide and improve the
38 information available to both professionals, who are in contact with
39 youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide
40 suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of suicide; and
41 educate youths and families at risk about the resources available for
42 suicide prevention and intervention.

43
44 2. As used in this act:

45 "Alcohol and drug counselor" means a person who is a certified
46 alcohol and drug counselor or a licensed clinical alcohol and drug

1 counselor pursuant to P.L.1997, c.331 (C.45:2D-1 et seq.).

2 "Attempted suicide" means destructive behavior intended by the
3 actor to result in the actor's harm or death.

4 "Certified Domestic Violence Specialist" means a person who has
5 fulfilled the requirements of certification as a Domestic Violence
6 Specialist established by the New Jersey Association of Domestic
7 Violence Professionals.

8 "Completed suicide" means a death that is known or reasonably
9 suspected to have resulted from an intentional act of the deceased,
10 regardless of whether it has been ruled a suicide by a medical
11 examiner.

12 "Council" means the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention
13 Advisory Council established pursuant to this act.

14 "Division" means the Division of Mental Health Services in the
15 Department of Human Services.

16 "Teaching staff member" means a member of the professional staff
17 of any school district, regional board of education or the board of
18 trustees of a charter school, or any board of education of a county
19 vocational school, who holds an office, position or employment of
20 such character that the qualifications for the office, position or
21 employment require the member to hold a valid and effective standard,
22 provisional or emergency certificate, appropriate to the member's
23 office, position or employment, issued by the State Board of
24 Examiners. Teaching staff member includes a school nurse and a
25 school athletic trainer.

26 "Youth" means a person 24 years of age or younger.

27

28 3. a. Any teaching staff member, who, as a result of information
29 obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable
30 cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed
31 suicide, shall promptly report such information to the division in a
32 form and manner prescribed by the division.

33 b. A nonpublic school is encouraged to require any member of its
34 professional staff, who, as a result of information obtained in the
35 course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or
36 believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly
37 report such information to the division in a form and manner
38 prescribed by the division.

39 As used in this subsection, "nonpublic school" means an elementary
40 or secondary school within the State, other than a public school,
41 offering education in grades K-12 or any combination thereof, at
42 which a child may legally fulfill compulsory school attendance
43 requirements.

44 c. Any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family
45 therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant,
46 alcohol and drug counselor, or registered nurse or licensed practical

1 nurse licensed in this State pursuant to Title 45 of the Revised
2 Statutes, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the
3 person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that
4 a youth has attempted or completed suicide, shall promptly report such
5 information to the division in a form and manner prescribed by the
6 division.

7 d. Any public health official, probation officer, employee of the
8 Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part, Certified Domestic
9 Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by
10 the council as having a likelihood to know about suicide attempts and
11 deaths, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the
12 person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that
13 a youth has attempted or completed suicide, is encouraged to promptly
14 report such information to the division in a form and manner
15 prescribed by the division.

16 e. The reporting form established by the division shall not require
17 the reporter to identify the student or youth by name or other unique
18 identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-identifying
19 demographic information about the student or youth, other attempts
20 made by the student or youth and the response or referral made to deal
21 with the incident.

22 f. The reporting form shall be submitted to a designated employee
23 of the division with responsibility for compiling data from the reports.
24 Information contained in the reports shall not be considered a public
25 record, but the division may aggregate the data for the purpose of
26 preparing an annual report pursuant to section 6 of this act.

27 g. The division shall offer to provide persons who are required or
28 encouraged to report an attempted or completed suicide with current
29 information about public and private assistance available to survivors
30 and families of attempted and completed suicides and professionals
31 who deal with suicide.

32 h. The reporting of an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to
33 this section shall not replace or alter any other requirement of law or
34 professional standard or obligation that requires a person to evaluate
35 a death or report an attempted or completed suicide.

36 i. Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide
37 pursuant to this act shall have immunity from any civil or criminal
38 liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad
39 faith or with malicious purpose.

40 j. No provision of this act shall be deemed to require the disclosure
41 of, or penalize the failure to disclose, any information which would be
42 privileged pursuant to the provisions of sections 18 through 23,
43 inclusive, of P.L.1960, c.52 (C.2A:84A-18 through 2A:84A-23).

44

45 4. There is established in the Department of Human Services the
46 New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council.

1 a. The purpose of the council shall be to: examine existing needs
2 and services and make recommendations to the division for youth
3 suicide reporting, prevention and intervention; advise the division on
4 the content of informational materials to be made available to persons
5 who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division
6 in the development of regulations required pursuant to this act.

7 b. The council shall consist of 17 members as follows:

8 (1) the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior
9 Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice
10 Commission established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.284 (C.52:17B-169
11 et seq.) and the chairman of the Community Mental Health Citizens
12 Advisory Board established pursuant to P.L.1957, c.146 (C.30:9A-1
13 et seq.), or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;

14 (2) six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one
15 person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory
16 board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide, one
17 person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school
18 teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local
19 board of education, one psychiatrist and one person with professional
20 experience in the collection and reporting of social science data;

21 (3) three public members appointed by the President of the Senate,
22 no more than two of whom are members of the same political party,
23 two of whom have volunteer or paid experience in the provision of
24 services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of attempting suicide,
25 and one of whom is an alcohol and drug counselor; and

26 (4) three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General
27 Assembly, no more than two of whom are members of the same
28 political party, two of whom have knowledge of and interest in the
29 prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education about
30 suicide to high-risk populations, including religious, racial, ethnic or
31 sexual minorities, and one of whom is a pediatrician.

32 c. The public members shall be appointed no later than 60 days
33 after the date of enactment of this act.

34 d. The public members shall serve for a term of five years; but, of
35 the members first appointed, three shall serve for a term of two years,
36 three for a term of three years, three for a term of four years and three
37 for a term of five years. Members are eligible for reappointment upon
38 the expiration of their terms. Vacancies in the membership of the
39 council shall be filled in the same manner provided for the original
40 appointments.

41 e. The council shall organize as soon as practicable following the
42 appointment of its members and shall select a chairperson and vice-
43 chairperson from among the members. The chairperson shall appoint
44 a secretary who need not be a member of the council.

45 f. The public members shall serve without compensation, but shall
46 be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of

1 their duties and within the limits of funds available to the council.

2 g. The council shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail
3 itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or
4 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may
5 require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

6 h. The Department of Human Services shall provide staff support
7 to the council.

8

9 5. The Commissioner of Human Services shall develop and
10 publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness
11 campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention, the goals of
12 which shall be to:

13 a. increase voluntary reporting of youth suicides and attempts at
14 suicide by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and
15 attempts in the course of their employment;

16 b. increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services
17 available to youths who contemplate or attempt suicide;

18 c. increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of youth
19 suicide attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with
20 depression and suicide; and

21 d. encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public
22 and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce
23 the incidence of attempted and completed suicides by youths.

24

25 6. a. The division shall compile data about reported attempted and
26 completed suicides by youths in the State, without identifying any
27 individuals involved.

28 b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall issue a report
29 annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing
30 a summary of the data compiled by the division that includes aggregate
31 demographic information about youths who attempt or complete
32 suicide. The report shall include any recommendations for legislation
33 or regulatory changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate
34 data or the provision of more effective suicide prevention and
35 intervention.

36 c. The commissioner shall provide specific findings about youth
37 suicides and attempts to the council, as soon as possible, to assist the
38 council in fulfilling its responsibility under this act to make
39 recommendations about youth suicide prevention and intervention.

40

41 7. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the
42 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
43 seq.), shall adopt regulations to carry out the purposes of this act.

44

45 8. Section 6 of P.L.1985, c.195 (C.30:9A-17) is repealed.

1 9. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 This bill establishes a youth suicide prevention and reporting
7 program in the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department
8 of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect
9 information about those youth who attempt suicide and improve the
10 information available to both professionals, who are in contact with
11 youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide
12 suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of youth suicide;
13 and educate youth and families at risk about the resources available for
14 suicide prevention and intervention.

15 With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides by
16 youth, the bill:

17 ! requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who,
18 as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's
19 employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a
20 student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report
21 the information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The
22 bill also encourages a nonpublic school to require any member
23 of its professional staff to make these reports;

24 ! requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and
25 family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician
26 assistant, alcohol and drug counselor, or registered or licensed
27 practical nurse in this State, who, as a result of information
28 obtained in the course of the person's employment, has
29 reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has
30 attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the
31 information to the division; and

32 ! encourages any public health official, probation officer,
33 employee of the Family Court, Certified Domestic Violence
34 Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by the
35 New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council
36 (established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know about
37 youth suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of
38 information obtained in the course of the person's employment,
39 has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has
40 attempted or completed suicide, to report the information to
41 the division.

42 The reporting form established by the division, pursuant to this bill,
43 shall not require the reporter to identify the person by name or other
44 unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-
45 identifying demographic information about the person, other attempts
46 made by the person and the response or referral made to deal with the

1 incident. Also, the bill requires the division to offer to provide persons
2 who are required or encouraged to report an attempted or completed
3 suicide with current information about public and private assistance
4 available to survivors and families of attempted and completed suicides
5 and professionals who deal with suicide.

6 Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide
7 pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal
8 liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad
9 faith or with malicious purpose.

10 The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Youth Suicide
11 Prevention Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services.
12 The purpose of the council is to: examine existing needs and services
13 and make recommendations to the division for youth suicide reporting,
14 prevention and intervention; advise the division on the content of
15 informational materials to be made available to persons who report
16 attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division in the
17 development of regulations required pursuant to this bill.

18 The members of the council shall include:

19 ! the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior
20 Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile
21 Justice Commission and the chairman of the Community
22 Mental Health Citizens Advisory Board, or their designees,
23 who shall serve ex officio;

24 ! six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one
25 person who is a current member of a county mental health
26 advisory board, one person with personal or family experience
27 with suicide, one person who is a current or retired primary or
28 secondary school teacher, one person who is a current or
29 former member of a local board of education, one psychiatrist
30 and one person with professional experience in the collection
31 and reporting of social science data;

32 ! three public members appointed by the President of the Senate,
33 two of whom have volunteer or paid experience in the
34 provision of services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of
35 attempting suicide and one of whom is an alcohol and drug
36 counselor; and

37 ! three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General
38 Assembly, two of whom have knowledge of and interest in the
39 prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education
40 about suicide to high-risk populations, including religious,
41 racial, ethnic or sexual minorities and one of whom is a
42 pediatrician.

43 The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to
44 develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public
45 awareness campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention, the
46 goals of which shall be to:

- 1 ! increase voluntary reporting of youth suicides and attempts at
- 2 suicide by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and
- 3 attempts in the course of their employment;
- 4 ! increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services
- 5 available to youths who contemplate or attempt suicide;
- 6 ! increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of youth
- 7 suicide attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated
- 8 with depression and suicide; and
- 9 ! encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term
- 10 public and private mental health services, as well as other
- 11 services, to reduce the incidence of attempted and completed
- 12 suicides by youths.

13 The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data
14 about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the
15 State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner
16 of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council,
17 the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data
18 compiled by the division, which includes aggregate demographic
19 information about youth who attempt or complete suicide. The report
20 shall include any recommendations for legislation or regulatory
21 changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate data or the
22 provision of more effective youth suicide prevention and intervention.

23 The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth
24 Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of
25 that council is completed.

ASSEMBLY FAMILY, WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 3035

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 6, 2003

The Assembly Family, Women and Children's Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 3035.

As amended by the committee, this bill establishes a youth suicide prevention and reporting program in the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect information about those youth who attempt suicide and improve the information available to both professionals, who are in contact with youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of youth suicide; and educate youth and families at risk about the resources available for suicide prevention and intervention.

With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides by youth, the bill:

- ! requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The bill also encourages a nonpublic school to require any member of its professional staff to make these reports;
- ! requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant, alcohol and drug counselor, or registered or licensed practical nurse in this State, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the division; and
- ! encourages any public health official, probation officer, employee of the Family Court, Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council

(established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know about youth suicide attempts and deaths, who, as a result of information obtained in the course of the person's employment, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to report the information to the division.

The reporting form established by the division, pursuant to this bill, shall not require the reporter to identify the person by name or other unique identifier, but may require that the reporter supply non-identifying demographic information about the person, other attempts made by the person and the response or referral made to deal with the incident. Also, the bill requires the division to offer to provide persons who are required or encouraged to report an attempted or completed suicide with current information about public and private assistance available to survivors and families of attempted and completed suicides and professionals who deal with suicide.

Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the council is to: examine existing needs and services and make recommendations to the division for youth suicide reporting, prevention and intervention; advise the division on the content of informational materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of regulations required pursuant to this bill.

The members of the council shall include:

- ! the Commissioners of Human Services, Health and Senior Services, and Education, the executive director of the Juvenile Justice Commission and the chairman of the Community Mental Health Citizens Advisory Board, or their designees, who shall serve *ex officio*;
- ! six public members appointed by the Governor, as follows: one person who is a current member of a county mental health advisory board, one person with personal or family experience with suicide, one person who is a current or retired primary or secondary school teacher, one person who is a current or former member of a local board of education, one psychiatrist and one person with professional experience in the collection and reporting of social science data;
- ! three public members appointed by the President of the Senate, one of whom has volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of attempting suicide, one of whom is an alcohol and drug counselor, and one of whom is a representative of the New Jersey Traumatic Loss Coalition; and

- ! three public members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, one of whom has knowledge of and interest in the prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education about suicide to high-risk populations, including religious, racial, ethnic or sexual minorities, one of whom is a pediatrician, and one of whom is a school-based counselor.

The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention, the goals of which shall be to:

- ! increase voluntary reporting of youth suicides and attempts at suicide by professionals who are likely to know of suicides and attempts in the course of their employment;
- ! increase referrals by these professionals to therapeutic services available to youths who contemplate or attempt suicide;
- ! increase public awareness of the incidence and causes of youth suicide attempts and decrease the stigma currently associated with depression and suicide; and
- ! encourage the use by families of short-term and long-term public and private mental health services, as well as other services, to reduce the incidence of attempted and completed suicides by youths.

The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data compiled by the division, which includes aggregate demographic information about youth who attempt or complete suicide. The report shall include any recommendations for legislation or regulatory changes that would aid in the collection of more accurate data or the provision of more effective youth suicide prevention and intervention.

The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of that council is completed.

This bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 1515 (2R) Aca (Inverso), which was also reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to replace the public member appointed to the advisory council who has:

- ! volunteer or paid experience in the provision of services to survivors of suicide or youth at risk of attempting suicide with a representative of the New Jersey Traumatic Loss Coalition; and
- ! knowledge of and interest in the prevention of youth suicide and the provision of education about suicide to high-risk populations with a school-based counselor.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3035

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 20, 2003

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 3035 (1R).

Assembly Bill No. 3035 (1R) establishes a youth suicide prevention and reporting program in the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the program is to: collect information about those youth who attempt suicide and improve the information available to both professionals, who are in contact with youth at risk of suicide, and families at risk; identify and provide suitable intervention services to reduce the incidence of youth suicide; and educate youth and families at risk about the resources available for suicide prevention and intervention.

With respect to reporting suicide attempts or completed suicides by youth, the bill:

- ! requires any teaching staff member (in a public school), who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the Division of Mental Health Services. The bill also encourages a nonpublic school to require any member of its professional staff to make these reports;
- ! requires any licensed psychologist, social worker, marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, physician, physician assistant, alcohol and drug counselor, or registered or licensed practical nurse in this State, who, has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to promptly report the information to the division; and
- ! encourages any public health official, probation officer, employee of the Family Court, Certified Domestic Violence Specialist, or member of a professional group identified by the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council (established in the bill) as having a likelihood to know about youth suicide attempts and deaths, who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a youth has attempted or completed suicide, to report the information to the division.

Any person who reports an attempted or completed suicide pursuant to this bill shall have immunity from any civil or criminal

liability on account of that report, unless the person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose.

The bill establishes a 17-member New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in the Department of Human Services. The purpose of the council is to: examine existing needs and services and make recommendations to the division for youth suicide reporting, prevention and intervention; advise the division on the content of informational materials to be made available to persons who report attempted or completed suicides; and advise the division in the development of regulations required pursuant to this bill.

The bill also directs the Commissioner of Human Services to develop and publicize, in consultation with the council, a public awareness campaign on youth suicide prevention and intervention.

The Division of Mental Health Services is directed to compile data about reported attempted and completed suicides by youth in the State, without identifying any individuals involved. The Commissioner of Human Services is directed to issue a report annually to the council, the Governor and the Legislature containing a summary of the data compiled by the division.

The bill repeals N.J.S.A.30:9A-17, which established a Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council in 1985, because the work of that council is completed.

As reported, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 1515 (3R), as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill was not certified as requiring a fiscal note.