

2015-J1557

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 6, 2015, as the First Annual New York State Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to increase awareness of serious issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim Wednesday, May 6, 2015, as the First Annual New York State Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day; and

WHEREAS, This momentous occasion is sponsored by the American Society for Suicide Prevention (ASFP), an organization dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research, education, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Between 2001 and 2009, an average of 33,000 suicide deaths occurred each year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Suicide is the 10th leading cause of all deaths in the United States, the third leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 15 to 24, and the second leading cause of death among college students; and

WHEREAS, Twenty percent of those who die by suicide are active or retired members of the military; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, one person commits suicide every 14.2 minutes; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that 4.6 million people in the United States are survivors of suicide (those who have lost a loved one to suicide); and

WHEREAS, 50.2 percent of people who die by suicide use a firearm, and guns stored in the house are used for suicide 40 times more often than

for self-protection; and

WHEREAS, For every American who dies by suicide, more than 30 others attempt suicide, and many more suffer the despair that leads them to consider taking their own life; and

WHEREAS, The stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness too often impede an individual's ability to seek treatment, share their personal story, grieve appropriately for the loss of a loved one, and move through a journey of healing and recovery; and

WHEREAS, A great many suicides are preventable; and

WHEREAS, Reducing the number of suicides requires the engagement and commitment of people in many sectors in and outside of government, including public health, mental health, health care, the Armed Forces, business, entertainment, media, and education; and

WHEREAS, Effective prevention programs and policies stress the importance of wellness, resiliency, and protective factors; effective suicide response and intervention programs address risk factors, mental health and substance abuse services, and crisis response for those struggling with suicidal behaviors; effective support programs are required for those who have been touched by suicide or suicidal behavior; and

WHEREAS, State advocacy efforts, through legislation, such as mandating regular suicide prevention training for school personnel; requiring anti-bullying and anti-cyber bullying policies in schools; ensuring mental health parity and access to affordable mental health treatment; and reducing access to firearms for persons at risk of suicide can lead to state-wide improvements and awareness; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of advocates, caregivers, consumers and professionals work tirelessly to raise awareness, reduce stigma, educate New Yorkers and influence public policy such that mental health services are

readily available and accessible, and the state's capacity to prevent the tragedy of suicide among its populace is strengthened; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 6, 2015, as the First Annual New York State Suicide Prevention Advocacy Day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, the American Society for Suicide Prevention, and the New York State Chapters of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.