

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Suicide remains one of the top 10 leading causes of death for all age groups in the U.S. and the second-leading cause of death for teenagers, ages 15-19. Suicide is a serious public health problem that can have lasting harmful effects on individuals, families, and communities. While its causes are complex and determined by multiple factors, the goal of suicide prevention is simple: Reduce factors that increase risk and increase factors that promote resilience. Ideally, prevention addresses all levels of influence: individual, relationship, community, and societal. Effective prevention strategies are needed to promote awareness of suicide and encourage a commitment to social change.

As you consider Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriations, we respectfully request that the committee take steps to address the rise in suicide rates, including the following specific requests:

- Language that supports SAMHSA's development of support resources to affected family and friends. We request the following language:

"The Committee recognizes the rising rate of suicide and that family and friends are often in the best position to recognize the warning signs of suicide and to help an at-risk individual get the treatment they need. The Committee urges SAMHSA to develop and disseminate programs to provide specialized training and resources on identifying and responding to people at risk of suicide for families and friends of at-risk individuals."

- At least \$2.5 million to reinstate dedicated funding at the CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control for suicide prevention. This will allow the CDC, the nation's leading public health and prevention agency, the ability to implement and evaluate comprehensive suicide prevention programs. These programs will focus on addressing key risk factors for suicidal behavior, including substance abuse and mental illness, as well as reducing the likelihood that suicidal ideation will progress to a suicide attempt, and that a suicide attempt will result in death. In addition, the programs will

more broadly work to identify practices that build resilience and strengthen social and emotional well-being.

We greatly appreciate your leadership and consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

John Katko