

State of Arkansas
76th General Assembly
Regular Session, 1987
By: Representative Blair

HOUSE BILL 1423

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ARKANSAS YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION COMMISSION; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE OPERATION OF THE COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

WHEREAS, suicide is the second leading cause of death among youth aged 15-24 in the United States; and

WHEREAS, every day an average of sixteen young Americans kill themselves, over 6,000 every year; and

WHEREAS, the suicidal rate among young people has increased by more than three hundred percent since 1955; and

WHEREAS, from 1970 to 1980, among 15 to 24 year olds in the United States, the actual number of youth suicides increased by forty percent while the rate of increase among youthful Arkansans was eighty-eight percent, more than double the national average; and

WHEREAS, the underlying causes of youth suicide and the related behavioral difficulties faced by adolescents are not adequately researched, documented and understood,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. The Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Commission is hereby established to administer the Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Program. The purposes of the Commission are to (1) assess the needs of high risk youth in the State of Arkansas, identify service system gaps, and make recommendations on courses of action that can be taken at the family, school, community, and state levels to minimize the risks these youth face; (2) purchase, create, or promote the creation of education materials appropriate for training in the area of youth suicide prevention; (3) develop a means of dissemination of the

youth suicide prevention education materials throughout the State of Arkansas; and (4) implement goals of the Commission.

The Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Commission shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor for appointment of two-year terms. Members shall include, but not be limited to, a youth, representative of the business community, mental health professional, health professional, an educational professional, the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Arkansas, and three members to be appointed at large by the Lieutenant Governor. Each Congressional District shall be represented by membership on the Commission. All members shall be appointed by July 1, 1987. The Lieutenant Governor shall serve as Chairman of the Commission. The Lieutenant Governor shall also appoint one member of the Arkansas House of Representatives and one member of the Arkansas Senate to be members of the Commission in an advisory capacity without vote.

The Commission may select and retain the services of consultants whose advice is considered necessary to carry out the mandate of the Commission in the manner prescribed by law.

SECTION 2. Recognizing that the dissemination of youth suicide prevention materials may be most effective if performed at the community levels, the Commission will wherever possible, utilize the community mental health centers as the local sites for education. Provided further, funds may be extended by the Commission for state-wide educational endeavors when appropriate.

The educational priority of this Act applies to parents, professionals and Arkansas youth involved or potentially involved in cases of youth suicide. The Commission may also provide for education of the general public, and it may dispense educational materials regarding the prevention of youth suicide. The Commission may make the gathering of statistics on youth suicide one of its goals.

SECTION 3. Members of the Commission shall serve without pay, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for meals, lodging, and travel (mileage) at the same rate as authorized for official travel by State employees.

SECTION 4. Persons other than the State or Commission shall not acquire actionable right by virtue of this Act.

SECTION 5. The Commission shall have the power to receive and expend grants, donations, and funds from public and private sources to carry out its responsibilities under this Act. It is expressly prohibited from rendering patient care or promulgating any rule or regulation or engaging in any regulatory activity. The program of the Commission may be implemented in stages or phases within the availability of funds for such purpose.

SECTION 6. There is hereby established for the Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Commission for the 1987-89 biennium, the following maximum number of regular employees whose salaries shall be governed by the provisions of the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act, or its successor, and all laws amendatory thereto. Provided, however, that any position to which a specific maximum annual salary is set out herein in dollars, shall be exempt from the provisions of said Uniform Classification and Compensation Act. All persons occupying positions authorized herein are hereby governed by the provisions of the Regular Salaries Procedures and Restrictions Act, or its successor.

Item Class	Maximum No. of Employees	Maximum Annual Salary Rate Fiscal Years	
		1987-88	1988-89
No. Code Title			
(01) Director	1	\$31,500	\$31,500
Secretary	1	14,000	14,000
Max. No. of Employees	2		

SECTION 7. There is hereby appropriated, to the Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Commission, to be payable from the State General Services Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses for the Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Commission for the biennial period ending June 30, 1989, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEARS	
	1987-88	1988-89
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$ 45,500	\$ 45,500
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	11,400	11,400
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION		
(A) OPER. EXPENSES	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000

(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	0	0	
(C) PROF. FEES	0	0	
(D) CAPITAL OUTLAY	0	0	
(E) DATA PROCESSING	0	0	
TOTAL MAINT. & GEN. OPER.			40,000_ 40,000_
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED			\$96,900_ \$96,900_

SECTION 8. The Lieutenant Governor, serving as Chairman of the Commission, shall be the Disbursing Officer of the funds appropriated by this Act.

SECTION 9. Any unexpended balance of the appropriations made for fiscal year 1987-88 in Section 7 of this Act which remain unexpended at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1987 shall be transferred forward and made available for the same purposes for the 1988-89 fiscal year.

SECTION 10. The Commission shall periodically prepare reports of its findings for dissemination to appropriate agencies and interested persons.

SECTION 11. EMERGENCY. It is hereby found and determined by the General Assembly that the creation of the Arkansas Youth Suicide Prevention Commission will greatly assist in dealing with the problem of youth suicide in this State; that this Act should, therefore, be given effect immediately. Therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Act being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval.

