

From: Representative Greg Walden Representative.Greg.Walden@mail.house.gov
Subject: Suicide Prevention Bill Signed Into Law
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News from Representative Walden

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Dear Susan:

According to the Oregon Health Authority, suicide is the second leading cause of death among Oregonians aged 15 to 34 years, and the eighth leading cause of death among all Oregonians in 2012. This is a tragic result of mental health being pushed to the shadows of shame and stigma for decades.

In order to bring this issue out of the darkness, I proudly cosponsored **H.R. 2345, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act**, which would seek to study the feasibility of designating a 3-digit dialing code to be used for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system to make it as easy as possible for patients to get the help they need. I am proud to let you know that this important piece of legislation was **recently signed into law** by President Trump.

Millions of Americans each year, particularly young people and veterans, struggle with depression and mental health issues. It is critical to connect those contemplating suicide with the support they need, and there's more we can do to help. The National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act takes steps to establish a nationwide 3-digit suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline, making the number as intuitive as dialing 9-1-1. I have met with suicide prevention advocates in Oregon about this bill's potential to save lives, and was proud to support this important change.

I have been a long-time strong supporter of mental health programs, especially for young people. For example, I worked across the aisle to pass the nation's first youth suicide prevention bill into law, the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act (named in memory of the son of former Oregon Senator Gordon Smith). To help prevent further tragedies, we need to get to the root of the problem and to improve treatment, boost resources, and simplify the bureaucracy surrounding the federal mental health system in our country. That's why I also supported the 21st Century Cures Act, which included the first rewrite of our nation's mental health laws since JFK was president. By streamlining federal programs and boosting support for mental health funding, we can empower families, communities, and mental health professionals to help prevent troubled youth from harming themselves and others.



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Please know that I will continue to work to support mental health programs and fight the stigma around mental health and suicide.

It is an honor to serve as your representative in the U.S. Congress.

Best regards,

Greg Walden
U.S. Representative
Oregon's Second District

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