

Introduced: 5/17/84
Referred: State Affairs

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE RULES COMMITTEE

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 79

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IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

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THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

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Relating to federal efforts concerning

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suicide research and prevention.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 WHEREAS suicide is a significant state and national health problem, as
9 demonstrated by the following facts:

10 (1) suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United
11 States, the third leading cause of death among adolescents and the second
12 leading cause of death among college and university students;

13 (2) the suicide rate among individuals 15 to 25 years of age in
14 the United States has increased approximately 300 percent during the last
15 25 years and continues to rise;

16 (3) the suicide rate in this state, 25.3 deaths per 100,000, is
17 twice the national rate of 12.4 deaths per 100,000, ranking Alaska second
18 among the 50 states;

19 (4) the suicide rate among youth is rising more rapidly than the
20 rate for any other group in the state, especially in the rural areas;

21 (5) the rate of suicide among Natives in the state is triple the
22 rate for the non-Native population; and

23 WHEREAS the federal government is best suited to develop a detailed
24 data base of national statistics with which each state could measure the
25 severity of its problem; and

26 WHEREAS the federal government is best suited to coordinate research
27 on the physical, psychological, and social conditions associated with
28 suicides; and

29 WHEREAS our Canadian neighbors, whose northern territories are also

1 particularly affected, have already taken steps at the federal level; and

2 WHEREAS both the United States government and this state are trying to
3 reduce the incidence of suicide and suicide attempts;

4 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature supports and encour-
5 ages the United States Congress to form a federal commission to study the
6 causes of suicide and to identify the most effective means of prevention,
7 intervention, and education; and be it

8 FURTHER RESOLVED that because this state suffers so greatly from
9 suicides, at least one member of the commission shall be from Alaska.

10 Copies of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Tom Lantos,
11 Chairman of the House Select Committee on Youth and Families; the Honorable
12 George Miller, Chairman of the House Select Committee on Aging and the
13 Elderly; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank
14 Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
15 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.