

**From:** Rep.James  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 25, 2019 4:04 PM  
**To:** \*Legislative All Assembly; \*Legislative All Senate  
**Subject:** Co-Sponsorship Memo for LRB-4241 relating to grants related to preventing suicide by firearm and making an appropriation  
**Attachments:** 19-4241\_1 (2).pdf



**CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** Wednesday, September 25, 2019

**TO:** Legislative Colleagues

**FROM:** Representative James, Representative Sargent

**RE: Co-sponsorship of LRB-4241/1:** relating to grants related to preventing suicide by firearm and making an appropriation

**DEADLINE:** Wednesday, October 2, 2019 at 5:00 PM

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This legislation is part of a broader package of bills recommended by the Speaker's Task Force on Suicide Prevention. This bipartisan task force was created in March of 2019 and held six public hearings across the state with the charge of evaluating the current resources for suicide prevention and identifying opportunities to target and assist at-risk individuals.

LRB-4241/1 is meant to bring mental health professionals and firearm retailers and ranges into the decision making process of preventing suicides. This bill is a way to de-stigmatize mental health by allowing individuals and their families to voluntarily store their firearms in a safe place while they get through their time in crisis. It also allows firearm ranges and retailers to become a part of the conversation on mental health and suicide.

The Gun Shop Project was first started by the New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition after three people, with no connection to each other, purchased a firearm from the same store and killed themselves. The medical examiner's office brought this to the attention of their mental health liaison, a small group of firearm retailers, and mental health/public health practitioners to explore whether there is a role for gun stores in preventing suicide. This is when the New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition was formed and its main goal is to bring mental health providers, firearm retailers, and firearm rights advocates together on ways they can

help prevent suicide. The project developed materials for firearm retailers and range owners on ways they can help prevent suicide.

The objectives are to: share guidelines on how to avoid selling or renting a firearm to a suicidal customer, encourage gun stores and firing ranges to display and distribute suicide prevention materials tailored to their customers. Currently, 12 states, including Wisconsin partake in this project in some way. Currently, Essential Shooting Supplies in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin will store firearms for individuals, no questions asked, for a small fee of \$5 while the individual or family gets through their crisis.

This legislation will take what the Gun Shop Project's initiatives were in New Hampshire and what some gun shop owners are doing in Wisconsin already, statewide. This bill directs the Department of Health Services to award grants to organizations for sharing guidelines and training staff at firearm retailers/firearm ranges on avoiding selling firearms to persons who may be considering suicide, providing materials relating to suicide prevention, and providing voluntary firearm storage.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Representative James' office at 6-9172 or respond to this email by Wednesday, October 2, 2019 at 5:00 PM

If you or someone you know is struggling, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1.800.273.8255 or text "HOPELINE" to 741741.

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***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

This bill requires the Department of Health Services to award grants to organizations or coalitions of organizations, including cities, villages, towns, and counties, for 1) sharing guidelines and training staff at a firearm retailer or firearm range on avoiding selling or renting a firearm to persons who may be considering suicide; 2) providing suicide prevention materials for distribution at a firearm retailer or firearm range; or 3) providing voluntary firearm storage. A grant recipient must contribute matching funds or in-kind services having a value equal to at least 20 percent of the grant amount. For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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State of Wisconsin  
2019 - 2020 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4241/1

KP:skw&kjf

## 2019 BILL

1 **AN ACT** *to create* 20.435 (5) (eh) and 51.73 of the statutes; **relating to:** grants  
2 related to preventing suicide by firearm and making an appropriation.

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***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

This bill requires the Department of Health Services to award grants to organizations or coalitions of organizations, including cities, villages, towns, and counties, for 1) sharing guidelines and training staff at a firearm retailer or firearm range on avoiding selling or renting a firearm to persons who may be considering suicide; 2) providing suicide prevention materials for distribution at a firearm retailer or firearm range; or 3) providing voluntary firearm storage. A grant recipient must contribute matching funds or in-kind services having a value equal to at least 20 percent of the grant amount.

For further information see the ***state and local*** fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

3 **SECTION 1.** 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert  
4 the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

**BILL****SECTION 1****2019-20****2020-21****1 20.435 Health services, department of****2 (5) MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES****3 (eh) Grants to prevent suicide by****4 firearm GPR B 75,000 75,000****5 SECTION 2.** 20.435 (5) (eh) of the statutes is created to read:**6 20.435 (5) (eh) Grants to prevent suicide by firearm.** Biennially, the amounts  
**7 in the schedule for grants related to preventing suicide by firearm under s. 51.73.****8 SECTION 3.** 51.73 of the statutes is created to read:**9 51.73 Grants to prevent suicide by firearm. (1)** From the appropriation  
**10 under s. 20.435 (5) (eh), the department shall award grants to organizations or**  
**11 coalitions of organizations, which may include a city, village, town, or county, for any**  
**12 of the following purposes:****13 (a)** To share guidelines and train staff at a firearm retailer or firearm range on  
**14 how to avoid selling or renting a firearm to a person who may be considering suicide.****15 (b)** To provide suicide prevention materials for distribution at a firearm retailer  
**16 or firearm range.****17 (c)** To provide voluntary firearm storage.**18 (2)** The department may not award a grant under sub. (1) unless the recipient  
**19 contributes matching funds or in-kind services having a value equal to at least 20**  
**20 percent of the grant.****21 (3)** The department may not award a grant to a recipient under sub. (1) for an  
**22 amount that exceeds \$5,000. The department may not award a grant under sub (1)**  
**23 having a duration of more than one year and may not renew a grant awarded under**

**BILL**

1 sub. (1). In awarding grants under sub. (1), the department shall give preference to  
2 organizations or coalitions of organizations that have not received a grant under this  
3 section.

4 (END)