



JOAN BALLWEG

PO Box 8952, State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53708-8952
Toll-free: (888) 534-0041
Fax: (608) 282-3641
Rep.Ballweg@legis.wi.gov

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

41ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Rep. Joan Ballweg

February 5, 2020
(888) 534-0041

Suicide Prevention Bill Signed Into Law

Madison... Representative Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan), Chair of the Speaker's Task Force on Suicide Prevention, was proud to join Governor Evers on February 4, 2020 as he signed the first of the nine proposals put forward by the task force.

The bill, authored by Representative Cindi Duchow (R-Delafield) and Senator Alberta Darling (R- River Hills) will provide grants to high schools to either establish or support ongoing peer-to-peer suicide prevention programs. The impact of these programs was illustrated by testimony from students, parents and teachers and by the documentary, *Kids in Crisis: You're Not Alone*, which followed four Wisconsin teenagers and their experiences with mental health challenges.

"During our public hearing in Ripon, which focused on student and youth suicide, we heard a lot about the importance of having a healthy, positive and supportive environment within our schools," said Rep.Ballweg. "This bill will provide funding to programs like Sources of Strength and HopeSquads which train students to recognize the warning signs of suicide and improve school culture to reduce stigma."

The 15-member bipartisan Speaker's Task Force on Suicide Prevention was charged with evaluating current prevention efforts in the state and identifying opportunities to better support individuals who are struggling. They travelled across the state for six public hearings to focus on prevention efforts for at-risk communities such as veterans, first responders and law enforcement, youth and farmers.

If you or someone you care about needs help, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text the Wisconsin HOPELINE at 741741.

###