

HOUSE BILL NO. 187

INTRODUCED BY M. DUNWELL

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION; ESTABLISHING EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION GRANTS; APPROPRIATING FUNDS; AMENDING SECTION 53-21-1101, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**NEW SECTION. Section 1. Evaluation of grant applications for youth suicide prevention activities.** (1) Grant awards made pursuant to 53-21-1101 for programs focused on preventing youth suicide must describe the prevention protocol that is being proposed to reduce the number of completed suicides, suicide attempts, or suicidal ideation.

- (2) The department shall give a higher priority to proposals:
  - (a) that use research-based practices shown to be statistically effective in peer-reviewed journals; and
  - (b) for which an applicant demonstrates that the applicant will implement a research-proven practice with fidelity.

**Section 2.** Section 53-21-1101, MCA, is amended to read:

**"53-21-1101. Suicide prevention officer -- duties.** (1) The department of public health and human services shall implement a suicide prevention program administered by a suicide prevention officer attached to the office of the director of the department.

- (2) The suicide prevention officer shall:
  - (a) coordinate all suicide prevention activities being conducted by the department, including activities in the addictive and mental disorders division, the health resources division, and the public health and safety division, and coordinate with any suicide prevention activities that are conducted by other state agencies, including the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the department of corrections, the department of military affairs, and the university system;
  - (b) develop a biennial suicide reduction plan that addresses reducing suicides by Montanans of all ages, ethnic groups, and occupations;



1 (c) direct a statewide suicide prevention program with evidence-based activities that include but are not  
2 limited to:

3 (i) conducting statewide public awareness campaigns aimed at normalizing the need for all Montanans  
4 to address mental health problems and utilizing both paid and free media, including digital and social media, and  
5 including input from government agencies, school representatives from elementary schools through higher  
6 education, mental health advocacy groups, veteran groups, and other relevant nonprofit organizations;

7 (ii) initiating, in partnership with Montana's tribes and tribal organizations, a public awareness program  
8 that is culturally appropriate and that utilizes the modalities best suited for Indian country;

9 (iii) seeking opportunities for research that will improve understanding of suicide in Montana and provide  
10 increased suicide-related services;

11 (iv) training for medical professionals, military personnel, school personnel, social service providers, and  
12 the general public on recognizing the early warning signs of suicidality, depression, and other mental illnesses;  
13 and

14 (v) providing grants to entities, including but not limited to tribes, tribal and urban health organizations,  
15 local governments, schools, health care providers, professional associations, and other nonprofit and community  
16 organizations, for development or expansion of evidence-based suicide prevention programs in accordance with  
17 the requirements of 53-21-1111 and [section 1]."

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19 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Appropriation for youth suicide prevention programs.** There is  
20 appropriated \$1.6 million from the general fund to the department of public health and human services for the  
21 biennium beginning July 1, 2019, for grants made pursuant to 53-21-1101 for youth suicide prevention programs.  
22 Applications for grants funded by the appropriation must be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of  
23 53-21-1111 and [section 1].

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25 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an  
26 integral part of Title 53, chapter 21, part 11, and the provisions of Title 53, chapter 21, part 11, apply to [section  
27 1].

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29 **NEW SECTION. Section 5. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2019.

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