



Re: SB333 / Proposed Amendment to The Jason Flatt Act - Kansas

To Senate Committee on Education – Kansas:

Suicide is not only a leading cause of death for our youth nationally and in Kansas, but it is also recognized as a leading cause of preventable death for our youth by the CDC and SAMHSA. Prevention's foundation is awareness and education for those who are in contact with our youth. Educators are specifically noted in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention as a select group whose training can and will impact suicide prevention.

When Kansas passed The Jason Flatt Act – Kansas in 2016, they became the 19th state to pass this legislation recognizing the importance of providing their educators with the information, tools and resources – not to be counselors – but to be better equipped to recognize and assist students who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide.

With suicide being the 2nd leading cause of death for Kansas youth ages 10-24, only surpassed by the grouping of “unintentional injuries” which includes car accidents, drug overdoses, etc., it is more important than ever to not weaken Kansas' efforts in addressing this “Silent Epidemic” of youth suicide by lessening those who are to be trained and especially removing any length of time requirement of such training (Kansas passed the requirement of 1 hour or more, most states who have passed The Jason Flatt Act has a two-hour minimum).

As a parent who has lost a child to his tragedy of youth suicide, like many parents in Kansas that I have met in my visits to Kansas, I don't want another parent to feel this hole in their heart that losing a child by suicide makes...nor, do I want another young person to feel that suicide is a solution to a situation or problem because they do not see help. Please keep strong in the course of prevention and do not weaken the strong effort you have begun to save lives. I ask that you not amend and weaken The Jason Flatt Act – Kansas that was passed in 2016.

Respectfully,

Clark Flatt
President, The Jason Foundation, Inc.
“Jason's Dad”

[Educational Programs and Seminars in Awareness and Prevention of Youth Suicide](#)

18 Volunteer Drive • Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075
Phone: 615-264-2323 • Fax: 615-264-0188 • Toll-Free: 1-888-881-2323 • www.jasonfoundation.com