

# COMBATING THE NATIONAL SUICIDE CRISIS

## Signing Jake's Law

**“Insurance companies should be covering mental health, just like they cover an annual physical. And we’re going to make sure they do.”**

Governor Doug Ducey

### Background

- Nearly 4 Arizonans die each day from suicide – that is higher than the number of deaths from car crashes.
- Groups at higher risk of suicide include seniors, teens, veterans, and Native Americans.
- Studies have found that over 50% of individuals with mental illness do not receive the behavioral health services they need.

### Recent Action

- The FY2018 budget added \$3 million (\$10M Total Funds) to expand behavioral health services on school campuses, funding over services for 15,810 Arizona public school students, a 700% increase.
- In the 2018, Governor Ducey signed The Mitch Warnock Act, requiring suicide prevention training for public school employees.
- The FY2020 budget included \$20 million for schools to hire additional counselors and SROs. The FY2021 Executive Budget includes an addition \$38 million for schools to hire even more positions.
- In 2020, ADHS released the Suicide Prevention Action Plan to collect new data, improve mental health and ensure access to treatment.

**“This Action Plan calls for a whole community approach to prevent suicide.”**

Arizona Department of Health Services Director

Dr. Cara Christ

### **S.B. 1523** **Jake's Law**

#### **SPONSORS**

**Senator**

**Kate Brophy McGee**

**Representative**

**Jeff Weninger**

- Requires insurance companies cover mental health treatment, just like they would an annual physical.
- Creates the Children's Behavioral Health Services Fund and provides \$8 million for behavioral health services for children who are uninsured or underinsured.
- Prohibits insurance companies from denying coverage for services that are covered by the plan simply because they are delivered in an educational setting.
- Establishes a mental health parity advisory committee to ensure that all parties including families, providers, advocacy organizations, and insurers have a voice at the table.
- Creates a suicide mortality review team to review deaths by suicide and provide policymakers with improved data and recommendations.
- Helps increase follow-up services for patients at risk for suicide.