



STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH
and Subcommittee on Children's Mental Health

March 25, 2022

Dear Members of the Minnesota State Legislature:

The State Advisory Council on Mental Health and the Subcommittee on Children's Mental Health strongly encourage the full funding and support of the implementation of the 988 Crisis Line, as outlined in H.F. 4398.

As Minnesota begins to recover from the worldwide pandemic, we face another epidemic – mental health challenges at the level we have not seen before in our lifetimes. What we do know, is that when people are faced with a crisis, such as suicidal ideation, our decision-making capacity can be impaired at the most critical moments. Recent research has found that when a person is seriously considering suicide, the window to intervene can be as short as 5 minutes from decision to lethal action. Only one person can ultimately change the potential action, and we need to use our technology and resources to support anyone making that life-or-death decision.

We have an opportunity to make the access to life saving help available immediately, easily, and statewide. Minnesota is well on the way to building a strong crisis response system. We have local suicide prevention and education strategies, including Regional Coordination for suicide prevention, available across Minnesota. We are working on expanding the needed capacity of our Crisis Response Teams, which is a critical service for our Minnesota communities. The transition to emergency access to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline through 988 is needed as the “third leg” of the stool to assist the people of Minnesota to reduce deaths by suicide.

We strongly encourage the full funding and support of the implementation of the 988 Crisis Line, as outlined in H.F. 4398.

Sincerely,

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