

SUICIDE PREVENTION COMMISSION

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 228 (proposed substitute H-1)

Sponsor: Sen. Jim Runestad

House Committee: Health Policy

Senate Committee: Health Policy and Human Services

Complete to 9-4-19

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 228 would create a Suicide Prevention Commission to work with state departments and nonprofit organizations on researching causes and underlying factors of suicide and to prepare a report for the legislature with recommendations for reducing risk factors with yearly updates thereafter. The bill would sunset the commission at the end of 2024.

The bill would create the Suicide Prevention Commission within the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council would have to furnish clerking services to the commission. The commission would have to do all of the following:

- Work with state departments and agencies and nonprofit organizations on researching the causes and possible underlying factors of suicide in the state. The research would have to focus on the demographic groups with the highest suicide rates in the state in the decade immediately preceding the bill's effective date, as well as those with the highest growth in suicide rates during that time period.
- Prepare and present a preliminary report to the legislature within six months of the bill's effective date. The report would have to include the possible causes for the increase in suicide rates, recommendations for reducing risk factors among the demographic groups studied, and other information the commission considers relevant.
- By one year after the bill's effective date, and each year thereafter, prepare and present to the legislature an updated version of the report.
- Annually review and update recommendations made under the act and provide a process for the ongoing monitoring of any implemented recommendations.
- Provide recommendations for a process by which continued state coordination on suicide data collection, suicide prevention programs, and a coordinated state approach regarding suicide prevention could continue after the act expires.

The commission would have to establish subcommittees consisting of individuals who are not members of the commission, including experts in matters of interest to the commission. The commission could also research policy recommendations from relevant sources and policy initiatives from other states in order to make recommendations to the governor and to the chairpersons of the House and Senate standing committees on health policy and on the judiciary on initiatives to reduce suicide rates among the demographic groups studied.

Commission membership and administration

The bill would create a 27-member Suicide Prevention Commission. Appointments to the commission would be shared by the governor, the directors of the Departments of State Police, Health and Human Services, and Military and Veterans Affairs, the Speaker of the House, and the Senate Majority Leader and would be made from lists of nominees submitted by designated agencies and organizations. The number of members each entity would appoint, and the expertise or demographic group the appointee would represent, are specified in the bill. As a whole, appointees would represent suicide prevention researchers, health insurers, law enforcement, mental health and physical health professionals, schools, faith-based organizations, suicide crisis hotlines or suicide prevention services programs, survivors of suicide attempts, and those who lost someone to suicide. Names submitted for appointment would also include individuals having an expertise in drug addiction, suicide prevention, and workplace stress and suicide prevention. Appointments would have to be made within 90 days of the bill's effective date. Further, the Michigan Veteran's Facility Ombudsman, or his or her designee, would also serve as a member of the commission.

Members would serve a four-year term, and the bill provides for the filling of vacancies and removal of members for such issues as incompetence and dereliction of duty. The commission would elect a chairperson and officers at the first meeting and would meet quarterly thereafter (or more frequently at the call of the chair or if requested by at least five members). A majority of the members would constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting, and a majority of the members present and serving would be required for official action. All business would have to be conducted at a public meeting held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Writings prepared, owned, used, possessed, or retained by the commission in the performance of an official function would be subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Further, commission members would serve without compensation but could be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties as members of the commission.

Executive committee

At the commission's first meeting, it would have to establish a seven-member executive committee consisting of a cross-section of commission members, as specified in the bill. The executive committee would oversee the compilation of data and available resources in coordination with the state's universities and set timelines and tasks for the completion of the commission's work by December 30, 2024.

The bill would take effect 90 days after being enacted and would sunset (no longer apply) as of December 31, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 228 likely would increase costs for the Legislative Council by an unspecified amount. While members of the commission would serve without compensation, members could be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties. Costs associated with reimbursements would be directly related to the complexity of the commission's work in meeting its obligations under the bill and the

frequency of commission meetings. Additionally, to the extent that additional staff are needed within the Legislative Council to satisfy its responsibility of providing clerking services, annual costs would increase. According to the most recent workforce report, the average cost of salary and fringe benefits for a state classified employee is \$110,000.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.