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**ENGROSSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1181**

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AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2022 Regular Session

**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2022 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Orwall, Boehnke, Callan, Leavitt, Davis, Dolan, Valdez, Young, Riccelli, Lekanoff, Barkis, Peterson, Shewmake, Bronoske, Macri, and Morgan)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/22.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing programs and measures to prevent  
2 suicide among veterans and military members; adding new sections to  
3 chapter 43.60A RCW; adding a new section to chapter 18.130 RCW;  
4 adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW; adding a new section to  
5 chapter 46.18 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 74.04 RCW; adding  
6 a new section to chapter 9.41 RCW; adding a new section to chapter  
7 39.04 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 43.34 RCW; creating new  
8 sections; providing effective dates; and providing an expiration  
9 date.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Suicide is a public health issue that  
12 affects many Washington families and communities daily. Over the last  
13 10 years, Washington state has been at the forefront of suicide  
14 prevention, investing more in upstream suicide prevention strategies  
15 and supports with the goal of a noteworthy reduction in suicide by  
16 2025.

17 (2) At the request of the governor, in 2020 Washington  
18 stakeholders engaged in a national and statewide initiative to end  
19 veteran and military member suicide. This initiative culminated in a  
20 new state plan to educate providers and help them address the unique  
21 needs of veterans and military members, particularly those in

1 transition to civilian life; and to provide resources and supports  
2 including improved lethal means safety training. The purpose of this  
3 act is to support the implementation of that plan.

4 (3) Service members, veterans, and their families are at a higher  
5 risk of being affected by suicide as experiences prior to enlistment,  
6 during service, and transition from service can contribute to  
7 suicidal thoughts and behaviors. A report on post-9/11 era military  
8 deaths by the United States department of veterans affairs found that  
9 service members are four times more likely to die by suicide than in  
10 military operations. Over 7,000 service members died in combat during  
11 the global war on terror, while more than 30,000 active duty members  
12 and veterans died by suicide. For veterans of all United States  
13 military operations, there is an average of 22 suicide deaths per day  
14 across the country, with one occurring every 65 minutes.

15 (4) Washington is home to 544,290 veterans, 60,699 active duty  
16 service members, 17,941 guard and reserve service members, and  
17 2,000,000 military and veteran family members. Although veterans  
18 themselves make up only seven percent of the Washington population,  
19 they account for 19 percent of total suicides in the state. Nearly  
20 1,000 veterans have died by suicide in Washington state over the last  
21 five years. More than two-thirds of veterans who died by suicide in  
22 Washington used a firearm.

23 (5) Family members of veterans who die by suicide are at higher  
24 risk for future suicide due to the exposure of experiencing suicide  
25 loss. Research shows for every suicide that occurs, 135 people suffer  
26 from the effects either directly or indirectly, meaning veteran  
27 suicides impact a community of 2,600,000 people.

28 (6) There is no one path to suicide, but life experiences, moral  
29 injury, trauma, culture, and health can play a major role in suicidal  
30 behavior. Military and veteran culture in particular includes stigma  
31 around mental wellness and help-seeking behavior, emphasizes  
32 reliability on group cohesion, and facilitates access,  
33 comfortability, and familiarity with lethal means such as firearms.  
34 Additionally, a significant number of veterans do not seek care  
35 within the veterans administration system.

36 (7) The legislature intends to address the tragedy of suicide  
37 amongst veterans, military members, and their families through  
38 support of professionals and community and peer organizations serving  
39 veterans, cultural changes that support help-seeking behaviors, and  
40 investments in education, training, prevention, and care.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.60A  
2 RCW to read as follows:

3        (1) There is created in the department a suicide prevention  
4 community-based services grant program. The purpose of the grant  
5 program is to provide suicide prevention, peer support, and other  
6 assistance to at-risk and transitioning veterans and military members  
7 and their families in their communities.

8        (2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for the  
9 specific purposes provided in this section and amounts disbursed from  
10 the veterans and military members suicide prevention account created  
11 in section 3 of this act, the department, in consultation with the  
12 forefront suicide prevention center, must establish a process to  
13 receive, review, process, and award grants to organizations,  
14 including nonprofit and peer support community programs, that address  
15 veterans, military members, and their families who may be at risk of  
16 suicide and other mental health crises. Priority should be given to  
17 organizations using peer support models that use evidence-based,  
18 research-based, or promising practices.

19        (3) The department shall report to the legislature annually  
20 beginning July 1, 2023, on grant recipients, number of veterans and  
21 military members served, and the types of services offered by grant  
22 recipients.

23        (4) The forefront suicide prevention center shall evaluate the  
24 effectiveness of each grant program recipient providing suicide  
25 prevention and peer support services to veterans, military members,  
26 and their families who may be at risk of suicide and other mental  
27 health crises.

28        (5) For the purposes of this section, "forefront suicide  
29 prevention center" means the University of Washington's forefront  
30 suicide prevention center of excellence.

31        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.60A  
32 RCW to read as follows:

33        (1) The veterans and military members suicide prevention account  
34 is created in the custody of the state treasurer. The account shall  
35 consist of funds appropriated by the legislature, revenues received  
36 from the prevent veteran suicide emblem under section 8 of this act,  
37 and all receipts from gifts, grants, bequests, devises, or other  
38 donations from public and private sources to support veterans and  
39 military members suicide prevention measures. Expenditures from the

1 account may be used only for the purposes provided in subsection (3)  
2 of this section. Only the director or the director's designee may  
3 authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to  
4 allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is  
5 not required for expenditures.

6 (2) (a) The department may request and accept nondedicated  
7 contributions, grants, or gifts in cash or otherwise, and voluntary  
8 donations for deposit into the account, including funds generated by  
9 voluntary donations under (b) of this subsection.

10 (b) The department may accept, for deposit into the account,  
11 voluntary donations from persons who are: (i) Applying for a  
12 concealed pistol license or renewal of a concealed pistol license; or  
13 (ii) undergoing a background check under chapter 9.41 RCW in  
14 connection with the purchase of a firearm from a firearms dealer. The  
15 department shall coordinate with local law enforcement agencies, the  
16 department of licensing, and firearms dealers licensed under chapter  
17 9.41 RCW to develop a form and process for publicizing and collecting  
18 voluntary donations under this subsection. The department and the  
19 department of licensing shall post educational information regarding  
20 the voluntary donation provisions of this section on their websites.

21 (3) All moneys deposited into the account must be used for  
22 activities that are dedicated to the benefit of veteran and military  
23 member suicide education and prevention including, but not limited  
24 to: (a) Expanding the department's peer corps program; and (b)  
25 providing programs, peer support, and services that assist veterans  
26 and military members in addressing mental health and wellness impacts  
27 of military service, trauma, moral injury, and transition to civilian  
28 life. Funds may also be used for the suicide prevention community-  
29 based services grant program established in section 2 of this act.  
30 Funds from the account may not be used to supplant existing funds  
31 received by the department nor shall grant recipients use the funds  
32 to supplant existing funding.

33 (4) For the purposes of this section the following definitions  
34 apply:

35 (a) "Veteran" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 41.04.005  
36 and 41.04.007.

37 (b) "Military members" means actively serving members of the  
38 national guard or reserves, or active duty military personnel.

39 (c) "Account" means the veterans and military members suicide  
40 prevention account.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.60A  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        Beginning December 2022, subject to the availability of amounts  
4    appropriated for this specific purpose, the governor's challenge team  
5    and service members, veterans, and their families suicide prevention  
6    advisory committee shall report to the legislature on a biannual  
7    basis regarding implementation of the plan developed by the  
8    committee.

9        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 5.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.60A  
10    RCW to read as follows:

11        Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
12    specific purpose, the department shall:

13        (1) Create and maintain a database of information on nonprofit,  
14    for-profit, city, county, state, and federal organizations,  
15    providers, and resources that address the mental health, well-being,  
16    and suicide prevention of veterans, military members, and their  
17    families. The department shall establish criteria for inclusion in  
18    the database by July 1, 2022. The department must make the database  
19    accessible on its website to veterans, military members, and their  
20    families by July 1, 2023;

21        (2) Provide suicide prevention education training and information  
22    for veterans, military members, and their families that is accessible  
23    through the internet; and

24        (3) By December 1, 2023, create, in consultation with the  
25    suicide-safer homes task force, a web-based application to be shared  
26    by state agencies and primary care providers with veterans, military  
27    members, and their families to provide applicable information and  
28    resources including but not limited to benefits, mental health  
29    resources, and lethal means safety information.

30        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 6.**    A new section is added to chapter 18.130  
31    RCW to read as follows:

32        (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
33    specific purpose, the department shall consult with the department of  
34    veterans affairs to create educational materials informing health  
35    care providers regulated under this chapter about the availability of  
36    the nationwide 988 phone number for individuals in crisis to connect  
37    with suicide prevention and mental health crisis counselors. The  
38    educational materials must include information about the veterans

1 crisis line for veterans and service members, and, beginning July 1,  
2 2023, information about the resources developed under section 5 of  
3 this act.

4 (2) The department shall:

5 (a) Determine the health professions to which this section shall  
6 apply; and

7 (b) Collaborate with the corresponding disciplining authority  
8 under RCW 18.130.020 to ensure that the educational materials are  
9 distributed electronically to appropriate licensed health care  
10 providers when a provider renews his or her license.

11 (3) Beginning July 1, 2023, all health care providers are  
12 strongly encouraged to inquire with new patients entering care  
13 whether the patient is a veteran, member of the military, or a family  
14 member of a veteran or member of the military. If the patient  
15 responds in the affirmative, the provider is encouraged to share the  
16 educational materials created under this section with the patient.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70  
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
20 specific purpose, a suicide-safer homes task force is established to  
21 raise public awareness and increase suicide prevention education  
22 among new partners who are in key positions to help reduce suicide.  
23 The task force shall be administered and staffed by the department of  
24 veterans affairs. To the extent possible, the task force membership  
25 should include representatives from geographically diverse and  
26 priority populations, including tribal populations.

27 (2) The suicide-safer homes task force shall be cochaired by the  
28 director, or the director's designee, of the department of veterans  
29 affairs and the director, or the director's designee, of the  
30 forefront suicide prevention center and also consist of the following  
31 members:

32 (a) Two representatives of suicide prevention organizations,  
33 selected by the cochairs of the task force;

34 (b) Two representatives of the firearms industry, selected by the  
35 cochairs of the task force;

36 (c) Two individuals who are suicide attempt survivors or who have  
37 experienced suicide loss, selected by the cochairs of the task force;

38 (d) Two representatives of law enforcement agencies, selected by  
39 the cochairs of the task force;

1 (e) One representative from the department of health;  
2 (f) One representative from the department of fish and wildlife;  
3 (g) One individual representing veterans;  
4 (h) One member of a Washington or federally recognized Indian  
5 tribe;  
6 (i) Two veterans;  
7 (j) One representative of the national rifle association;  
8 (k) One representative of the Second Amendment foundation;  
9 (l) One representative of a nonprofit organization working on gun  
10 safety issues;  
11 (m) One representative of a national firearms trade association;  
12 (n) One representative of a Washington state pharmacy  
13 association; and  
14 (o) No more than five other interested parties, selected by the  
15 cochairs of the task force.

16 (3) The department of veterans affairs shall convene the initial  
17 meeting of the task force.

18 (4) The task force shall:

19 (a) Develop and prepare to disseminate online trainings on  
20 suicide awareness and prevention for firearms dealers and their  
21 employees and firearm range owners and their employees;

22 (b) Partner with medical providers, firearms dealers, firearms  
23 ranges, and pharmacies to develop and distribute suicide awareness  
24 and prevention messages for posters and brochures;

25 (c) In consultation with the department of fish and wildlife,  
26 develop strategies for creating and disseminating suicide awareness  
27 and prevention information for hunting safety classes, including  
28 messages to parents that can be shared during online registration, in  
29 either follow-up email communications, or in writing, or both;

30 (d) Create a website that will be a clearinghouse for the newly  
31 created suicide awareness and prevention materials developed by the  
32 task force;

33 (e) Continue to support medical providers with suicide prevention  
34 and awareness work through the dissemination of collateral education  
35 programs;

36 (f) Allocate funding towards the purchase of lock boxes for  
37 dissemination via the forefront suicide prevention center's TeleSAFER  
38 program;

1 (g) Develop and direct advocacy efforts with firearms dealers to  
2 pair suicide awareness and prevention training with distribution of  
3 safe storage devices;

4 (h) Partner with a statewide pharmacy association to market and  
5 promote medication disposal kits and safe storage devices;

6 (i) Train health care providers on suicide awareness and  
7 prevention, paired with distribution of medication disposal kits and  
8 safe storage devices; and

9 (j) Train local law enforcement officers on suicide awareness and  
10 prevention, paired with distribution of medication disposal kits and  
11 safe storage devices.

12 (5) The forefront suicide prevention center shall provide subject  
13 matter expertise, technical and programmatic support, and  
14 consultation and evaluation to the task force.

15 (6) Beginning December 1, 2022, the task force shall annually  
16 report to the legislature on the status of its work.

17 (7) This section expires July 1, 2024.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 46.18  
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 (1) The general public may purchase a prevent veteran suicide  
21 emblem for a prescribed fee set by the department. The emblem must be  
22 displayed on license plates in the manner described by the  
23 department, existing vehicular registration procedures, and current  
24 laws.

25 (2) The department, in creating the prevent veteran suicide  
26 emblem, must consult with the department of veterans affairs on the  
27 design of the emblem. The emblem must incorporate the 988 suicide  
28 prevention hotline or its successor.

29 (3) Revenues from the prevent veteran suicide emblem must be  
30 deposited into the veterans and military members suicide prevention  
31 account created in section 3 of this act.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** A new section is added to chapter 74.04  
33 RCW to read as follows:

34 During the application process for public assistance benefits,  
35 the department shall inquire of each applicant whether he or she has  
36 ever served in the United States military services or is a family or  
37 household member of someone who has ever served in the United States  
38 military services. If the applicant answers in the affirmative, the



1 department shall provide the applicant with information on how to  
2 contact the Washington department of veterans affairs to inquire as  
3 to whether the applicant may be eligible for any benefits, services,  
4 or programs offered to veterans, military members, or their families.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** A new section is added to chapter 9.41  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) In order to better prevent suicide by veterans, military  
8 members, and their families, an expansion of safe storage of firearms  
9 and reduced access to lethal means in the community is encouraged.

10 (2) A dealer who provides a service of allowing a person to  
11 temporarily store a firearm on the dealer's premises in a storage  
12 locker, box, or container that is locked and not accessible to the  
13 dealer does not thereby create a special relationship, for civil  
14 liability purposes, between the dealer and the person who temporarily  
15 stores the firearm on the dealer's premises.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** A new section is added to chapter 39.04  
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 (1)(a) For any building, bridge, ferry, or park being constructed  
19 or replaced after July 1, 2024, as a public works project, there must  
20 be installed in appropriate locations signs displaying the 988  
21 national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline.

22 (b) The public body as defined in RCW 39.10.210 in control of a  
23 public works project in this subsection must decide where signs under  
24 this section would be physically feasible and appropriate. The  
25 following facilities are recommended to have such signs:

26 (i) Bridges where suicides by jumping have occurred or are likely  
27 to occur; and

28 (ii) Locations that provide services to people that have high  
29 incidence of suicide or mental health conditions that would benefit  
30 from knowing about the hotline.

31 (c) The signs must be designed to communicate that dialing 988 on  
32 a telephone will connect callers to behavioral health and suicide  
33 prevention services as provided in accordance with state and federal  
34 laws governing the 988 number.

35 (d) If a sign is located along a state highway or the interstate  
36 system, the department of transportation must approve the location  
37 prior to erecting the sign, but no permit is necessary.

1 (e) Signs created under this section may not conflict with  
2 provisions of the manual of uniform traffic control devices or  
3 existing state laws related to placement and design of signs.

4 (2) This section does not create a private right of action by, or  
5 a legal duty to, any party, and may not be used to impose liability  
6 on the public body if a sign has or has not been erected on its  
7 property. The state of Washington, including all of its agencies,  
8 subdivisions, employees, and agents, shall not be liable in tort for  
9 any violation of this section, notwithstanding any other provision of  
10 law.

11 (3) The public body may accept gifts or donations to pay for the  
12 creation, installation, or maintenance of signs under this section.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** A new section is added to chapter 43.34  
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 Any memorial established on capitol campus to commemorate the  
16 global war on terror must recognize service members who died in  
17 Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation  
18 New Dawn, which are classified under the umbrella term global war on  
19 terror. Any such memorial must include a component designed to  
20 reflect on the great number of active duty service members and  
21 veterans who have died by suicide after serving in these wars. The  
22 design of such a memorial must serve to honor those who are lost and  
23 provide a sacred space for healing and reflection for veterans and  
24 military families.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** (1) The Washington state global war on  
26 terror memorial account is created in the custody of the state  
27 treasurer. The purpose of the account is to support the establishment  
28 and maintenance of the memorial. The secretary of state may solicit  
29 and accept moneys from gifts, grants, or endowments for this purpose.  
30 All receipts from federal funds, gifts, or grants from the private  
31 sector, foundations, or other sources must be deposited into the  
32 account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the  
33 design, siting, permitting, construction, maintenance, dedication, or  
34 creation of educational materials related to placement of this  
35 memorial on the capital campus. Only the secretary of state, or the  
36 secretary of state's designee, may authorize expenditures from the  
37 account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter  
38 43.88 RCW, but appropriation is not required for expenditures.

1 (2) The secretary of state may adopt rules governing the receipt  
2 and use of these funds.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** Section 11 of this act takes effect July  
4 1, 2024.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 15.** Section 8 of this act takes effect  
6 October 1, 2022.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 16.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
8 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
9 provided by June 30, 2022, in the omnibus appropriations act, this  
10 act is null and void.

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