

From: [Arellano, Joey](#)
To: [FLHouseDems](#)
Subject: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Reps Trabulsy and Hunschofsky Successfully Pass HB 655
Date: Friday, April 21, 2023 2:31:27 PM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 21, 2023

CONTACT

Zion Gates-Norris
Office of Representative Hunschofsky
Zion.Gates-Norris@myfloridahouse.gov

Sasha O’Kane
Office of Representative Trabulsy
Sasha.O'Kane@myfloridahouse.gov

Representatives Trabulsy and Hunschofsky Successfully Pass HB 655

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Yesterday, [SB 914 \(HB 655\)](#), was passed unanimously on the Florida House Floor by **Representative Dana Trabulsy (R-Port Saint Lucie)** and co-prime sponsor **Representative Christine Hunschofsky (D-Parkland)**.

Suicide is a major public health issue and a leading cause of death nationally. Currently, suicide is the 12th leading cause of death in the United States. In 2021, 48,183 suicide deaths were reported across the U.S, and 3,325 occurred in Florida alone.

Expanding upon the bill sponsored by **Representative Hunschofsky** in 2020 that established the Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse, this bill directs the Commission on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders to assess the adequacy of Florida’s 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline system and other components of the state’s behavioral health crisis system. It expands the duties of the Commission to analyze the current capacity of crisis response services throughout the State, to evaluate and make recommendations to improve linkages between Lifeline and crisis response services, and to identify funds that can be used to support crisis-response services. The bill includes provisions to allow volunteer and other affiliated first responder organizations to designate peers to overall better support first responders. It also adds the consideration of mental health first aid models to the purview of the Commission. Additionally, the bill adds a governor-appointed representative of our state’s 211 providers to the Commission.

“We are creating Legislation today that we hope can heal the State and maybe even the Nation in some ways. Each and every one of us has been affected by suicide in some way. This bill may not end suicide, but it will help us gather the tools to combat the mental illness in our State. An effective early response is critical in saving lives.” said **Representative Trabulsy**.

“The legislation is an important step in addressing the issue of suicide which is a

major public health issue and one of the leading causes of death nationally,” said **Representative Hunschofsky**. “One of the major benefits of this bill, is that it will expand the purpose of the Commission on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder to include assessment of state's suicide prevention infrastructure.”

###