

I MINA 'TRENT AI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN
2011 (FIRST) Regular Session

Resolution No. 195-31 (LS)

Introduced by:

B.J.F. Cruz

J.T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

T.R. Muna Barnes

A.A. Yamashita

Relative to raising awareness of suicide prevention and intervention training on Guam and to draw attention to the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, the Prevention and Training Branch staff and other PEACE Council stakeholders for working with national partners to make September the annual Suicide Awareness Intervention and Prevention Month and for their continued diligent efforts to reduce suicides and suicide attempts on Guam.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF *I MINA 'TRENT AI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN*:

WHEREAS, suicide is the fifth leading cause of death on Guam, and is widely recognized as a significant public health issue by the Guam community; and

WHEREAS, Guam's First Profile on Suicide was published in January 2009 and updated in April 2010 as products of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention and Training Branch's 3-year federal Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Grant; and

WHEREAS, Guam's *Focus on Life* efforts were initiated in 2008 as a comprehensive and strategic suicide prevention effort that began with suicide data collection, surveillance, analysis and reporting; and

1 **WHEREAS**, data-driven programs, policies and practices led by the
2 community for the community are vital for successful suicide prevention and early
3 intervention; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the average suicide death rate on Guam per 100,000 for 2000-
5 2010 period was 14.8; whereby the average U.S. suicide death rate per 100,000 is
6 10.9;

7 **WHEREAS**, Guam has an average 24.7 deaths per year - a rate of one
8 suicide every two weeks;

9 **WHEREAS**, Guam's 2010 rate is almost double the average US suicide
10 death rate with 90% of these deaths by suicide on Guam happen among males, at
11 an average age of 30 years;

12 **WHEREAS**, one in five suicide deaths occurs in those under twenty years
13 of age, two in five suicide deaths occur among those twenty to twenty nine years of
14 age, and about sixty percent of all suicide deaths occur in those under thirty years
15 of age; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Guam endures a disturbingly high rate of suicide among its
17 youth and adult population. The Guam Police Department reported unofficially
18 that for the months of January 1, 2007 through November 30, 2007, twenty-nine
19 deaths by suicide and sixty-one attempts were investigated; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the results of the 2007 Guam High School Youth Risk
21 Behavior Survey indicated that girls were more likely than boys to have had
22 suicidal ideations (28.0% vs. 16.6%), a suicide plan (27.5% vs. 15.9%), or made
23 suicide attempts (21.3% vs. 12.2%). Chamorro students had the highest percentage
24 (34.0%) of actual attempts of suicide, followed by 28.8% of students with multiple
25 ethnicities, and Filipino students at 13.6%; and

26 **WHEREAS**, twenty-six percent of suicide deaths in 2008-2010 involved
27 alcohol consumption, ten percent involved use of other drugs of abuse, twelve

1 percent of suicide deaths had a history of prior suicide attempts, ten percent had a
2 history of mental illness; and

3 **WHEREAS**, one in eight of those who died of suicide from 2008-2010 left
4 direct evidence (suicide note) of intention to commit suicide. About one in five left
5 indirect evidence of intent; and

6 **WHEREAS**, family dispute (39.0%) and personal relationship problem
7 (35.6%) were the circumstances leading to suicide or attempted suicide in 2006-
8 2008; and

9 **WHEREAS**, some of the factors correlated to suicidal ideation and attempts
10 among youth in 2007 included being hit by a boyfriend/girlfriend within the past
11 year, forced to have sex, sexual orientation, experiencing sadness for atleast two
12 weeks over the past twelve months, current alcohol and marijuana use, binge
13 drinking, and lifetime ice use; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Focus
15 on Life and PEACE efforts have made significant strides in raising knowledge and
16 awareness on Guam's suicide problem; and

17 **WHEREAS**, training is provided for human services providers, criminal
18 justice systems personnel, educators, elected leaders, youth and parents and other
19 community members in evidence-based programs such as ASIST (Applied Suicide
20 Intervention Skills Training) and safeTALK (Tell, Ask, Listen and KeepSafe); and

21 **WHEREAS**, to address prevent further suicide attempts and suicide deaths,
22 Guam's people must learn to recognize and treat mental health problems early and
23 families on Guam must learn how to cope with stress and to be nurturing and
24 supportive of each other; and

25 **WHEREAS**, Guam's youth, young adults and adults must learn and practice
26 having healthy, nonviolent interpersonal relationships and that everyone must be
27 taught to be tolerant of sexual orientation; and

1 **WHEREAS**, education and training in suicide prevention and early
2 intervention can be offered to young children and early adolescents by teaching
3 them about good mental health practices, to be involved in safe activities and to be
4 respectful of themselves and others; and

5 **WHEREAS**, everyone must take the time to learn how to recognize the
6 warning signs of suicide and learn to reach out and let others know you care; and
7 now therefore be it

8 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina'Trentai Unu Na*
9 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the
10 people of Guam, support the efforts of the Department of Mental Health and
11 Substance Abuse, **the Prevention and Training Branch staff and other PEACE**
12 **stakeholders** to raise awareness and trainings on prevention and early intervention
13 of suicide on Guam and to continuously work with local, regional and national
14 partners to stop suicide on Guam; and be it further

15 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Trentai Unu Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
16 hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam and its families, support the Focus on Life
17 suicide prevention and early intervention partnerships led by the Department of
18 Mental Health and Substance Abuse along with members of the Governor's
19 PEACE Council representative of Sanctuary Inc., Inafa' Maolek, Inc., Youth for
20 Youth LIVE, Guam, the Guam National Guard, the Department of Public Health
21 and Social Services, the University of Guam, Guam police Department, Health
22 Partners, LLC, Guam Alternative Lifestyles Association, Guam Identified Families
23 with Terrific Strengths – GIFTS, Guam SDA Wellness Center, Guam Chamber of
24 Commerce, Sorensen Media Group, Southern Christian Academy, Department of
25 Youth Affairs, Department of Education and Head Start Program, Mayors' Council
26 of Guam, Legislative committee on Health and Human Services, Guam Memorial

1 Hospital, and the U.S. District Court of Guam – U.S. Probation Office; and be it
2 further

3 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on
4 Rules certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that
5 copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to all members of the Governor’s
6 PEACE Council: Sanctuary Inc., Inafa’ Maolek, Inc., Youth for Youth LIVE,
7 Guam, Life Works Guam, the Department of Public Health and Social Services,
8 the American Association of Suicidology, American Foundation for Suicide
9 Prevention, The Glendon Association, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline,
10 the United States Department of Health and Human Services – Substance Abuse &
11 Mental Health Services Administration, Suicide Prevention Action Network, and
12 the Suicide Prevention Resource Center; and to the Honorable Edward J.B. Calvo,
13 *I Maga’lahen Guåhan.*