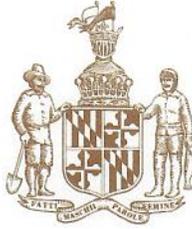


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Budget and Taxation Committee

Health and Human Services  
Subcommittee

*Joint Committees*

Administrative, Executive,  
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Audit

Children, Youth, and Families

Fair Practices and  
State Personnel Oversight

Pensions

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Testimony for Senate Bill 789

Public Health - Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee (Suicide Mortality Review and Prevention Act of 2020)

Finance Committee

March 4, 2020

Madam Chair  and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 789: Public Health - Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee (Suicide Mortality Review and Prevention Act of 2020). This legislation is a response to the mental health and suicide crises in our State.

We have already identified suicide as a serious problem in Maryland. In 2009, the Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention was established. The Commission's preamble identifies suicide as the 11<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Maryland. Senate Bill 789 is an extension of our efforts to prevent suicide deaths.

Senate Bill 789, establishes the Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee, consisting of various departments and agencies, to examine the factors contributing to suicide deaths including: trends; risk factors; best practices; lapses in response; and barriers to safety. The team must meet quarterly and make recommendations on policy or law changes to the Governor and General Assembly. Studies and findings will be disseminated to policymakers, health care providers, health care facilities, and the public.

Senate Bill 789 is an essential step in suicide prevention. Data and information are necessary to craft preventative interventions against suicide. I respectfully ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 789. Thank you.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Addie Eckardt".

Senator Addie Eckardt