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## BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 228 (as introduced 3-19-19)  
Sponsor: Senator Jim Runestad  
Committee: Health Policy and Human Services

Date Completed: 4-5-19

**CONTENT**

**The bill would enact a new law to create the "Suicide Prevention Commission" within the Legislative Council and to do all the following:**

- **Provide for the appointment of members to the Commission, their terms, and the Commission's procedures.**
- **Prescribe the duties and responsibilities of the Commission, such as researching the cause and possible underlying factors of suicide in the State.**
- **By January 1, 2020, require the Commission to prepare a preliminary report of its research and findings, and require the Commission to complete a revised report annually thereafter.**
- **Require the Legislative Council to furnish clerking services to the Commission.**
- **Specify that the Act would not apply beginning December 31, 2026.**

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

**Membership**

The Commission would consist of the following 25 members:

- 10 members appointed by the Governor.
- The Michigan Veteran's Facility Ombudsman or his or her designee.
- One member who was appointed by the Director of the Department of State Police with expertise in drug addiction.
- Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom represented a faith-based organization and one of whom represented nonmanagement-level laborers.
- Two members, appointed by the Senate Majority Leader, at least one of whom had expertise in suicide prevention from a community mental health services program that held a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Nine members appointed by the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The 10 members appointed by the Governor would be as follows:

- One who was a suicide prevention researcher with a doctor of philosophy degree from a university that was located in Michigan who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Association of State Universities.

- An undergraduate or graduate student who was studying or working in the area of suicide prevention who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Association of State Universities.
- One who was selected from a list submitted by the Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators.
- One who was selected from a list submitted by the School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan.
- One who represented health plans who was selected from lists submitted by the Michigan Association of Health Plans and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.
- One who had knowledge or expertise in retiree or vulnerable adult mental health issues who was selected from a list submitted by the Fraternal Order of Police.
- One who was a suicide loss survivor who was selected from a list submitted by the Michigan Sheriff's Association.
- One who had experience in suicide prevention who was selected from a list submitted by the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.
- One with expertise in suicide response who was selected from a list submitted by the Police Officers Association of Michigan.
- One who was selected from a list submitted by the Michigan Corrections Organization.

The nine members appointed by the Director of DHHS would be as follows:

- One who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.
- One who was selected from the list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Psychological Association.
- One who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Psychiatric Society.
- One who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Nurses Association.
- One who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Health and Hospital Association.
- One who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan Disabilities Rights Coalition.
- One who was selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Michigan chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.
- One who was a suicide attempt survivor.

#### Terms and First Meeting

The members first appointed to the Commission would have to be appointed within 90 days of the bill's effective date. Commission members would serve for terms of two years or until a successor was appointed, whichever was later. A vacancy would have to be filled in the same manner as the original appointment, and the member would have to be appointed for the balance of the unexpired term. The chairperson of the Commission could remove a member for incompetence, dereliction of duty, malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office, or any other good cause, on a motion that was approved by a majority of the members of the Commission.

The Council Administrator would have to call the first meeting of the Commission, at which it would have to elect from among its members a chairperson and other officers as it considered necessary or appropriate. After the first meeting, the Commission would have to meet at least quarterly, or more frequently at the call of the chairperson or if requested by five or more members.

A majority of the members of the Commission would constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the Commission. A majority of the members present and serving would be required for official Commission action. The Commission would be subject to the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Members of the Commission would have to serve without compensation; however, members of the Commission could be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties as members.

### Commission Duties

The Commission would have to work with State departments and agencies and nonprofit organizations on researching the causes and possible underlying factors of suicide in Michigan. The study would have to focus on the demographics showing the highest suicide rates in the State in the decade immediately preceding the effective date of the bill, and the highest growth in suicide rates during this time period.

By January 1, 2020, the Commission would have to prepare and present a preliminary report of its research and finding to the Legislature. The report would have to include the possible causes for the increase in suicide rates and recommendations for reducing risk factors among the demographics described above, and any other information the Commission considered relevant.

By June 1, 2021, and each year thereafter, the Commission would have to prepare and present to the Legislature an updated version of the report.

The Commission also would have to do the following:

- Annually review and update any recommendations made under the bill, and, if any of the Commission's recommendations were implemented, monitor the implementations.
- Provide recommendations for a process for continued State coordination on suicide prevention data collection and a coordinated State approach to the prevention of suicide to continue after the bill no longer applied.

The Commission could, through its chairperson, 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 the Judiciary on initiatives to reduce suicide rates among the studied demographics.

The Commission would have to establish subcommittees that may consist of individuals who were not members of the Commission, including experts in matters of interest to the Commission, including the studied demographics.

Legislative Analyst: Tyler VanHuyse

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the State's Legislative Council. The bill would create the Suicide Prevention Commission. Commission members would not receive a salary; however, they would be eligible for reimbursement for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The Legislative Council also would have to provide the Commission with clerking services, which could include assistance with the Commission's tasks of working with other entities, studying suicide prevention factors, and filing a report

with the Legislature. The bill does not specify the number of staff that would be needed, if any; however, the current estimated average annual cost for 1.0 FTE for a classified State employee is \$105,000 gross, \$55,500 General Fund/General Purpose for salary and benefits. The estimate could be higher or lower based on the classification level of the FTEs hired. Also based on appropriations for the most recent commission housed in the Legislative Council (the Criminal Justice Policy Commission), that Commission has received a total of \$550,000 since it was created in 2015.

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.