

**Resolution No. 195-31 (LS)**

Introduced by:

B. J.F. Cruz  
Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.  
T. R. Muña Barnes

Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D.	Sam A. Mabini, Ph.D.
T. C. Ada	Adolpho B. Palacios, Sr.
V. Anthony Ada	v. c. pangelinan
F. F. Blas, Jr.	R. J. Respicio
Chris M. Duenias	Dennis G. Rodriguez, Jr.
Judith P. Guthertz, DPA	M. Silva Tajeron



**Relative to recognizing and commending the Prevention and Training Branch staff of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and other PEACE Council stakeholders, for raising awareness of suicide prevention, and for providing intervention training on Guam; and does further extend *Un Dangkulo Na Si Yu'os Ma'ase* to them as they work with national partners and continue in their diligent efforts to reduce the suicide rate on Guam, as we observe September as the annual "Suicide Awareness Intervention and Prevention Month".**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN:**

**WHEREAS**, suicide is the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) 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, and were the products of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention and Training Branch's three (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

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

**WHEREAS**, from 2000 to 2010, the average suicide death rate on Guam was fourteen and eight-tenths (14.8) per one hundred thousand (100,000); whereby the average U.S. suicide death rate was ten and nine-tenths (10.9) per one hundred thousand (100,000);

**WHEREAS**, Guam has an average of twenty-four and seven-tenths (24.7) suicide deaths per year, a rate of one (1) suicide every two (2) weeks;

**WHEREAS**, Guam's 2010 rate is almost double the average U.S. suicide death rate, with ninety percent (90%) of these deaths by suicide on Guam happening among males, at an average age of thirty (30) years;

**WHEREAS**, one (1) in five (5) suicide deaths occurs in those under twenty-one (21) years of age; two (2) in five (5) suicide deaths occur among those twenty (20) to twenty-nine (29) years of age; and about sixty percent (60%) of all suicide deaths occur in those under thirty (30) years of age; and

**WHEREAS**, Guam endures a disturbingly high rate of suicide among its youth and adult population. The Guam Police Department reported unofficially that for the months of January 1, 2007 through November 30, 2007, twenty-nine (29) deaths by suicide and sixty-one (61) attempts were investigated; and

**WHEREAS**, the results of the 2007 Guam High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicated that girls were more likely than boys to have had suicidal ideations (28.0% vs. 16.6%), a suicide plan (27.5% vs. 15.9%), or made suicide attempts (21.3% vs. 12.2%). Chamorro students had the highest percentage with thirty-four percent (34%) of actual attempts of suicide, followed by twenty-eight and eight-tenths percent (28.8%) of students with multiple ethnicities, and Filipino students at thirteen and six-tenths percent (13.6%); and

**WHEREAS**, twenty-six percent (26%) of the suicide deaths in 2008 to 2010 involved alcohol consumption; ten percent (10%) involved the use of other drugs of abuse; twelve percent (12%) of suicide deaths had a history of prior suicide attempts; and ten percent (10%) had a history of mental illness; and

**WHEREAS**, one (1) in eight (8) of those who died of suicide from 2008 to 2010 left direct evidence (suicide note) of intention to commit suicide. About one (1) in five (5) left indirect evidence of intent; and

**WHEREAS**, family disputes (thirty-nine percent [39%]) and personal relationships problems (thirty-five and six-tenths percent [35.6%]) were the circumstances leading to suicide or attempted suicide in 2006 to 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, some of the factors correlated to suicidal ideation and attempts among youth in 2007 included being hit by a boyfriend/ girlfriend within the past year; being forced to have sex; sexual orientation; experiencing sadness for at least two (2) weeks over the past twelve (12) months; and current alcohol and marijuana use, binge drinking, and lifetime ice use; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Trentai Unu Na Libeslaturan Guahan* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, recognize and commend the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention and Training Branch Staff, and other PEACE stakeholders, and support their efforts to raise awareness, and for providing training on the prevention and early intervention of suicide on Guam as they continuously work with local, regional and national partners to stop suicide on Guam; and does further extend *Un Dangkulo Na Si Yu'os Ma'ase*, on behalf of the people of Guam and its families, and support the *Focus on Life* suicide prevention and early intervention partnerships led by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, along with the members of the Governor's PEACE Council, including the representatives from: Sanctuary, Inc.; *Inaja Maolek*, Inc.; Youth for Youth LIVE, Guam; the Guam National Guard; the Department of Public Health and Social Services; the University of Guam; the Guam Police Department; Health Partners, LLC; the Guam Alternative Lifestyles Association; Guam Identified Families with Terrific Strengths – GIFTS; the Guam SDA Wellness Center; the Guam Chamber of Commerce; Sorensen Media Group; Southern Christian Academy; the Department of Youth Affairs; the Department of Education and the Head Start Program; the Mayors Council of Guam; the Legislative Committee on Health and Human Services; the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority; and the U.S. District Court of Guam – U.S. Probation Office; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to all members of the Governor's PEACE Council: Sanctuary, Inc.; *Inaja Maolek*, Inc.; Youth for Youth LIVE, Guam; Life Works Guam; the Department of Public Health and Social Services; the American Association of Suicidology; the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; the Glendon Association; the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline; the United States Department of Health and Human Services – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; the Suicide Prevention Action Network, and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center; and to the Honorable Edward J.B. Calvo, *I Magsalubun Guahan*

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN ON THE 19<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2011.**

  
JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed.D.  
Speaker

  
TINA ROSE MUÑA BARNES  
Legislative Secretary

