



State of Rhode Island
GUBERNATORIAL PROCLAMATION

President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide

WHEREAS, suicide is a national public health challenge that causes immeasurable pain among individuals, families, and communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, the number of veteran and military suicides has exceeded 6,000 each year from 2008-2017; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, 2nd for people ages 10-35, and on average 129 Americans die by suicide each day accounting for 47,173 suicide deaths in 2017; and

WHEREAS, on March 5, 2019, the President signed Executive Order 13861 calling for the development of a comprehensive plan to empower veterans and end suicide through coordinated suicide prevention efforts, prioritized research activities, and strengthened collaboration across the public and private sectors. This plan is known as the President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide or PREVENTS (the "Roadmap"); and

WHEREAS, for every individual who feels alone, ashamed, or believes that they would be a burden if their thoughts or feelings were shared, there are scores of others in every community who want to help but are not sure how; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island businesses are in the unique position to leverage the learnings from our employees, including veterans, to encourage a national discussion on mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, and collaborate on meaningful solutions; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families that brings together interagency teams to address veteran suicide at the state level; and

WHEREAS, the PREVENTS national public health campaign REACH, will seek to increase awareness of mental health issues and suicide prevention to reduce suicide for all Americans;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Gina M. Raimondo, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, do hereby proclaim September 10th as **World Suicide Prevention Day** and pledge to work with local, state and federal officials to identify veterans and others in need of care; develop best mental health practices in the workplace, and call upon all citizens, public and private sector opinion leaders in the State of Rhode Island to raise awareness of mental health and suicide and support services available in their communities and to encourage all those in need to REACH to access help, hope, and community.

Given under my hand and the great seal of the State of Rhode Island, this 17th day of August, 2020



Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

Nellie M. Gorbea
Secretary of State