

Submitter: Stacie Shaver

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3643

My name is Stacie Shaver and I am writing in support of HB 3643. Designating October 9 as Oregon Youth Suicide Awareness Day is a critical step in helping address an epidemic in our state. Youth suicide is one of the leading causes of death in Oregon youth, and is impacting the health and wellbeing of thousands of youth.

Prom. Calculus exams. School lunches. Assemblies. Curfews. Football games. Essays. Group projects. This is what teens should be thinking about each day... but, in reality they are overwhelmed with growing up in a complicated world—. Social media, wars, negative politics, academic and social pressures, mental health crisis, and so much more.

In 2024, McMinnville High School lost 3 students to suicide. In one year. Ellie. Ronnie. Mikalynn. Three youth who lost their battle with mental health, and hundreds of others who were left behind to make sense of the unthinkable. Our youth need more- they need more support, more kindness, more love, more advocacy, more paths to health... more hope and more light.

By adopting this bill, the leaders of Oregon can send a message to the youth saying “we see you”. These youth need the leaders to take a bold step so that they can follow this light of hope and change the statistics that are our dark reality— that Oregon ranks in the top 15 states for suicide rates. Oregon leaders can start to remove the stigma and shame of suicide by adopting this bill and bring the problem of youth suicide to the front and help begin the conversations that will end these senseless deaths.

I urge you, please support this bill and honor the memories of so many youth who we have lost. For Mikalynn, Ronnie and Ellie. For all of those lost, and those left behind who are hurting. #lovelikemikakynn