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**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 323
The Jason Flatt Act**

**Presented to the House Education Committee
By Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt**

March 9, 2016

Chairman Highland and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 323, the Jason Flatt Act.

Preventing teen suicide is an important and worthwhile cause. The State Child Death Review Board, which is organizationally a part of the Attorney General's Office, has found that suicide is the second-leading cause of death for children age 10 through 17 in Kansas.

The Jason Foundation has worked with 16 other states to enact some form of the Jason Flatt Act. I am proud to serve as an ambassador for this organization and support their work. The organization is willing to provide resources to help school districts train teachers to identify the signs of at-risk youth who may be susceptible to suicide.

I am a strong supporter of bringing the Jason Flatt Act to Kansas. Over the past few months, my office has worked with the Jason Foundation and the Kansas State Department of Education on this important issue. The bill before your committee today would mandate that the Board of Education require two hours of training on suicide prevention for all certified teachers and principals. I agree that all teachers and principals should receive this training and that it will help save lives. I am also aware that the State Board of Education is already working to incorporate the requirements of the Jason Flatt Act into Kansas teacher training requirements. I support the Legislature's efforts to further emphasize the importance of instituting these requirements.

Thank you again for your consideration of this important issue.

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