



**STATE OF KANSAS
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

DEREK SCHMIDT
ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORIAL HALL
120 SW 10TH AVE., 2ND FLOOR
TOPEKA, KS 66612-1597
(785) 296-2215 • FAX (785) 296-6296
WWW.AG.KS.GOV

**Neutral Testimony on Senate Bill 323
The Jason Flatt Act**

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

January 26, 2016

Chairman Abrams and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on the Jason Flatt Act. I also thank Senator Smith for his leadership on this important issue.

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 to accomplish this through its role in setting the standards for training Kansas teachers. Before we were aware of this bill, we had developed a proposed resolution through which the Legislature could request the State Board of Education to incorporate the requirements of the Jason Flatt Act into Kansas teacher training requirements. 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. Whether that goal is accomplished through this bill or through other mechanisms is a decision for this committee to make.

Thank you again for your consideration of this important issue.

###