

My name is Theresa Papon. In 2016, my twin brother died by suicide and I joined the fight to help spread awareness and reduce suicide rates. I'm writing today in support of HB 2281, which would fund and support a continuum of crisis response services across Kansas and put the state infrastructure in place necessary to implement 988. The bill has now been scheduled for a Committee hearing this Monday, February 22nd.

Suicide is the 9th leading cause of death in Kansas and the 2nd leading cause of death for people ages 10-44. In our state more than 6 times as many people died by suicide in 2018 than in alcohol related motor vehicle accidents.

As a parent to 6 school age children, I'm have a vested interest regarding services available in Kansas, especially considering how covid-19 has altered their lives for almost a year now.

I am grateful Kansas is taking the time to discuss this need in our state and I appreciate your attention to this matter.