SECTION 1. In Hawai‘i, on average, one person dies by
suicide every two days. Suicide is the fourth leading cause of
death for children between the ages of ten and fourteen and is
the leading cause of death for young people between the ages of
fifteen and twenty-four. In Hawai‘i, suicide accounts for
twenty-five per cent of all fatal injuries.

Suicide rates vary by area, with neighbor island and rural
communities seeing higher rates than urban areas. For the
period from 2013 to 2015, the statewide suicide rate was 12.9
deaths for every one hundred thousand individuals. For the same
time period, for every one hundred thousand people, the counties
of Hawai‘i, Maui, and Kaua‘i had 20.4, 15.9, and 14.6 deaths,
respectively. The city and county of Honolulu's suicide rate,
at 10.3 deaths for every one hundred thousand people, was
slightly lower than the state average.

According to the state department of health, the percentage
of teenagers in Hawai‘i who plan to commit suicide and the
percentage of teenagers who attempt suicide are among the
highest in the nation. For the period from 2005 to 2013, the
percentage of high school-aged children with suicide ideation in
Hawai‘i ranged from sixteen to twenty per cent. For the same
time period, the percentage of high school-aged children treated
for a suicide attempt never dipped below three per cent.
Suicide attempts, like suicide deaths, have harmful,
lastingly, and profound impacts on families and communities. For
every person that dies by suicide, more than thirty others
attempt suicide. Therefore, it is important to monitor
hospitals and emergency departments to identify individuals in
need of immediate intervention.
The stigma of seeking mental health counseling places
formidable barriers to providing care and support to individuals
in crisis. States across the nation have sought to address this
issue by passing legislation mandating that teachers complete
in-service training in youth suicide awareness and prevention.
In 2007, Tennessee passed the Jason Flatt Act, which required
all educators in the state to complete two hours of youth
suicide awareness and prevention training every year to be
licensed to teach. Twenty states have passed variations of the
Jason Flatt Act.

The legislature finds that there is a need to increase the
number of individuals in educational institutions, such as
teachers, principals, and school counselors, who are trained to
identify youth at risk of suicide and refer those children to
appropriate services, counseling, and intervention.

The purpose of this Act is to require all teachers,
principals, and school counselors to complete two hours of
suicide prevention and education training each year.

SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
and to read as follows:

"§302A—Suicide prevention; in-service training. The
department shall require that in-service training include at
least two hours of suicide prevention education for all
teachers, principals, and school counselors each school year.
This education may be accomplished through the provision and
completion of suicide prevention materials approved by the
department."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.
SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY:

[Signatures]
Report Title:
Jason Flatt Act; Suicide Prevention Training; School Personnel

Description:
Requires two hours of annual in-service training in suicide prevention for all teachers, principals, and school counselors.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.