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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Suicide is a major public health problem and a leading cause of death in the United States that can have lasting effects on the family, friends, and communities of the person who acts to take his or her life; and

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WHEREAS, Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, and in 2015, was responsible for 44,193 deaths, or approximately one suicide death every 12 minutes; more than 1,000 Illinoisans die each year by suicide; Illinois death by suicide averages 2.9 every day, and suicide attempts average 16.7 every day; individuals ages 15 to 19 have the highest suicide attempt rate for any age group in Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, Goal 1 of the Illinois Department of Public Health's Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan is to "... increase awareness, knowledge, and competency in suicide prevention, assessment and treatment for first responders and health care, social service, clergy, law enforcement and school personnel"; and

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WHEREAS, Following the tragic loss of their 27-year old son, Stephen, the fifth of their eight children, to suicide on June 13, 1987, Stephen's parents, Edward and Mary Alice Sexton, decided to make their son's death a motivation for furthering

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1 life; and

2 WHEREAS, To realize that goal, the Sextons founded the  
3 Stephen Sexton Memorial Foundation in 1987 to raise funds for  
4 programs focused on the unmet need they discovered for suicide  
5 prevention, awareness, and research programs in Illinois; and

6 WHEREAS, Since its founding, the foundation has raised over  
7 \$1 million in funding for these programs, almost exclusively  
8 through the grassroots fundraising efforts of members of the  
9 Sexton Family and their friends; these programs include, among  
10 others, Maryville Academy's Stephen Sexton Training Institute  
11 and the Glenview Youth Service; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL  
13 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that in light of the  
14 critical importance of expanding suicide prevention and  
15 awareness in Illinois, and in recognition of the commitment and  
16 pioneering efforts of the Sexton Family over more than 30 years  
17 to fund prevention and awareness programs in Illinois in honor  
18 of the life of their son, Stephen T. Sexton, that we declare  
19 June 13, 2018 as Suicide Awareness Day in Illinois; and be it  
20 further

21 RESOLVED, That we encourage the sharing of suicide  
22 awareness and prevention strategies among individuals,

1 communities and organizations so that all Illinoisans have  
2 access to the resources they need to discuss suicide awareness  
3 and prevention and dispel the myths, stigma, and shame  
4 surrounding suicide that hinders efforts to prevent it; and be  
5 it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
7 presented to the Sexton family, the Maryville Academy, and the  
8 Glenview Youth Service.