



*"Saving Lives in Tennessee"*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **TSPN Announces Gubernatorial Candidates Stand on Suicide Prevention**

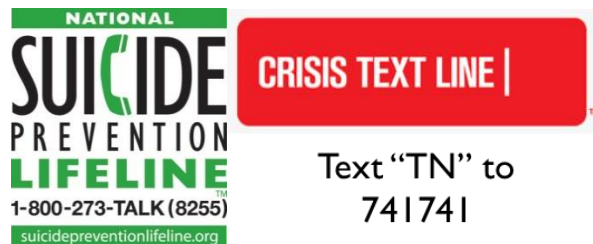
NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) wishes to announce the release of the Gubernatorial candidates stand on suicide prevention in Tennessee. At the recent Advisory Council Retreat, all Gubernatorial candidates were invited to speak to highlight how they would address suicide and suicide prevention if elected. To view their written responses, visit the TSPN webpage here, <http://tspn.org/2018-gubernatorial-responses>. TSPN wishes to provide these responses across Tennessee to inform those invested in suicide prevention, with no stance.

TSPN's Executive Director, Scott Ridgway, MS, sends his thanks to all candidate who attended and/or submitted their responses to the Advisory Council of TSPN, stating "with the support of our current Governor, TSPN has been able to grow and thrive across the state. During the last eight years, TSPN has grown from three staff to 6 staff with their support. The support of the next Governor is paramount to reduce the number of suicides in Tennessee." As the Advisory Council of TSPN is appointed by the Governor, all present had the opportunity to voice concerns and highlight the importance of suicide prevention for Tennesseans across the state.

The Advisory Council has approved the hiring of two additional staff for TSPN and has requested the State to match these dollars and are awaiting a response; the funds for these two additional staff are allocated from private funds. The Network has the continued pleasure to work closely with many different Commissioners of various State Departments. TSPN like to applaud Commissioner Marie Williams, LCSW, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, for her continued support of TSPN and her efforts towards making suicide prevention a priority in Tennessee. Without

Commissioner Williams leadership, TSPN would not be at our current stage of growth throughout Tennessee.

In any given day, three people in Tennessee die by suicide. In 2016, the number suicides increased in young people (ages 10-18) in Tennessee, with one person in this age group lost to suicide every week. TSPN recommends that all familiarize themselves with the warning signs of suicide (listed at <http://tspn.org/warning-signs>) so they can get help for themselves and those around them as needed. TSPN is also available to provide a free suicide prevention or awareness trainings across the state; to request a training visit our website (<http://tspn.org/request-training-now>).



TTY line: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

For non-emergency information on suicide prevention, contact the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at (615) 297-1077 or [tspn@tspn.org](mailto:tspn@tspn.org). More information about TSPN is available at the agency website ([www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org)).

TSPN is the statewide public-private organization responsible for implementing the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention. TSPN and its volunteers work across the state to organize activities & projects promoting suicide prevention awareness, providing suicide prevention & crisis intervention training to community organizations, and conducting postvention sessions for schools & organizations after suicides occur.