

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-C014
TITLE: Suicide Prevention Advocacy and Clergy Training
PROPOSER: New York
TOPIC: Theological Education

Directly Related: (Attached)

2000-D008 Adopt Diocesan Resolution on Suicide Prevention

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

1994-C026 Address Youth Suicide and Conflicts Over Sexuality
1988-D132 Support Exploration of Causes of Suicide Among Gay and Lesbian Youth
1985-A088 Encourage National and Congregational Support of Community Health Services

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

C014 Suicide Prevention Advocacy and Clergy Training

Proposer	Diocese of New York
Topic	Theological Education
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	HB / 15 - Ministry
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention recognize that clergy are often on the frontlines of suicide prevention; and be it further
- 2 *Resolved*, That the institutions and diocesan programs that educate Priest and Deacon candidates be requested to offer four (4) hours of suicide prevention education, using evidence-based trainings, for its students, and that dioceses offer similar suicide prevention training for their clergy; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$7,500 for the implementation of this resolution; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the General Convention urge local congregations to call on state and federal leaders to develop and implement strategies to increase access to quality mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention services.

EXPLANATION

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. Military veterans comprise 18% of all suicides and studies show that members of the LGBT community have an elevated risk. It is estimated over 1.1 million suicide attempts occur each year. Suicide is, however, preventable.

The importance of Priests and Deacons was outlined in a national report from the Surgeon General. It emphasized the need to “provide training on suicide prevention to community groups that have a role in the prevention of suicide and related behaviors. Thousands of first responders, crisis line volunteers, law enforcement professionals, clergy, teachers, school counselors, individuals working in the justice system and/or in law enforcement, and others who are on the frontlines of suicide prevention should be trained on suicide prevention.”

Funding Implications

The typical maximum cost for a four-hour training session for up to 30 participants is \$750. A widely used program is safeTALK (<https://www.livingworks.net/programs>), which meets the NSSP’s

standards for education programs. The estimated cost to provide one program within each diocese and education institution is \$7,500. The cost would cover fees toward trainers and educational material. Dioceses and educational institutions are encouraged to seek out local chapters of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (www.afsp.org) for additional financial support that may be needed in covering fees and materials



Resolution Number: 2000-D008
Title: Adopt Diocesan Resolution on Suicide Prevention
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention adopt and affirm the resolution on Suicide Prevention by the Diocese of West Tennessee at its 19th convention, March 25, 2000:

1. **We affirm our belief that, as St. Paul teaches (Romans 8:39), "Nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."**
2. **We pledge ourselves to collaborate with other religious bodies and secular agencies in educating ourselves to recognize and minister more appropriately to those among us who are especially at risk of suicide as well as those who are impacted by the suicide of others; and**
3. **We urge that all levels of the Episcopal Church, parochial, diocesan, and national, accord high priority to the prevention of suicide in prayers and programming.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 173.