

Representative Marvin Abney
Chairman House Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House 82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

March 1, 2026

Dear Representative Abney and Finance Committee Members:

Thank you for taking the time to consider my written personal and professional testimony today, in support of **Article 10, H7127: Funding for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline House Committee on Finance.**

My name is Michaela Cook, I currently reside in Cranston, RI. I write to you today as a volunteer field advocate for the RI Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. I am also a long-term survivor of suicide loss; a mental health consumer, a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker for individuals and families across the state; an active member/player and coach of the RI/MASS hockey community, amongst many other avenues that life intersects with regularly. My journey of loss and healing began on October 31, 2003, when I lost my best friend and college sweetheart, Jonathan Bagley to a death by suicide. Since that day, my life's work has been invested in my own recovery from PTSD; helping others heal through their own symptoms and loss of loved ones to suicide; and everyday impacts mental wellness and resources have on how we manage all of what is to come as well.

The sudden impact of recent tragic events in RI (at both Brown University and Lynch Arena) do not fully encompass the traumas that we, as Rhode Islanders, are currently processing and that will continue to need much support as we heal through the new year ahead. This testimony can only touch upon a few of the impacts all the above has had on my own healing journey and the ripple effects of the lives of so many others. The crisis in Rhode Island has only grown more urgent since Jonathan's death in 2003 and will continue to do so with the most recent incidents we face today.

By fully funding **Article 10, H7127**, you are helping save lives, divert emergency resources to other places of intense need and restore hope when there is no one else to turn to during a time of need. Our community needs this now more than ever.

Respectfully,

Michaela Cook, LICSW

Field Advocate, AFSP Rhode Island



Jonathan E. Bagley 11/21/78-10/31/2003