

**Tompkins County Legislature**

**Governor Daniel D. Tompkins Building**

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***PROCLAMATION***

WHEREAS, The Watershed Declaration was adopted on April 17, 2017, by a group of 18 governmental and non-profit organizations from Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, and the campuses of Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College, and

WHEREAS, The Watershed Declaration states: "We the assembled mental health stakeholders of the greater Ithaca community and Tompkins County recognize suicide as a serious public health concern. Today we renew our commitment to suicide prevention and pledge to intensify efforts toward saving lives and bringing hope to those struggling with suicide thoughts or affected by suicide loss", and

WHEREAS, The Watershed Declaration helped inspire the formation on July 31, 2017, of the Tompkins County Suicide Prevention Coalition at a meeting of more than 40 local mental health organizations organized by the Tompkins County Mental Health Services Department, and

WHEREAS, the suicide rate in the United States increased 24 percent from 1999 to 2014, and

WHEREAS, suicide is now the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, and the second leading cause of death for young Americans aged 15-34, and

WHEREAS, suicide is a serious public health problem that causes immeasurable pain, suffering, and loss to individuals, families, and communities, and carries heavy economic costs for individuals, families, communities, states, and the nation, and

WHEREAS, there is strong evidence that a comprehensive public health approach is effective in preventing suicide, and

WHEREAS, our health and behavioral health systems, schools, and communities need to collectively work to prevent suicide deaths using the best available information and practices, and

WHEREAS, every member of our community can play a role in protecting their friends, family members, and colleagues from suicide, and

WHEREAS, our community needs to advance suicide prevention by fighting the stigma around mental health and seeking treatment for mental disorders,

NOW THEREFORE, I, Michael E. Lane, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature, do hereby proclaim September 2017 as

**THE WATERSHED DECLARATION MONTH**

and call upon our citizens, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, health care providers, and educational institutions to raise awareness of Tompkins County's mental health support services, encourage those in need to seek treatment, honor those in our community we have lost too soon, commit to an all-out effort to prevent suicide, and support the efforts of the Tompkins County Suicide Prevention Coalition.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause to be affixed the great seal of the County of Tompkins this 5th day of September, 2017.



Michael E. Lane, Chair  
Tompkins County Legislature