

# Suicide (Prevention) Bill

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Schedule – Office for the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm

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**B I L L**

TO

Require the Secretary of State to set up a body to establish a public initiative for the prevention of suicide and self harm, to work with internet providers and others to reduce access to information on the internet and through other sources on methods of suicide and to develop a system of alerts and blocks for internet searches relating to suicide; and for connected purposes.

**B**E IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

**1 Office for the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm**

- (1) There shall be established an independent body known as the Office for the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm (referred to in this Act as “the Office”).
- (2) The Schedule makes provision about the Office.

**2 Objectives of the Office**

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- (1) The Office’s main objective is to reduce the incidence of suicide and self harm.
- (2) The Office’s main objective is supported by the following subsidiary objectives—
  - (a) to promote greater awareness of suicide and self harm as a major health problem in the United Kingdom; 10
  - (b) to encourage internet service providers and others to develop responsible practices around suicide-related content, including promoting sources of support and by removing content which actively encourages or glorifies suicide or self harm;
  - (c) to work with relevant bodies to implement a “Notice and Takedown” procedure by which service providers remove or disable access to potentially harmful content hosted on their networks; 15
  - (d) to encourage greater monitoring of websites, social networking sites and online chat rooms or forums which promote suicide or self harm;

- (e) to ensure that internet users who access content in relation to suicide and self harm receive appropriate help and advice in relation to suicide and self harm.
- (3) The Office shall aim to pursue, and to have regard to, its objectives when exercising a function that is relevant to it. 5

### 3 Functions of the Office

- (1) The Office has the responsibility –
- (a) to establish a public initiative for the prevention of suicide and self harm; 10
  - (b) to work with internet providers and others to reduce access to information on the internet, and through other sources on methods and instead direct internet users to websites which seek to provide support and assistance in the prevention of suicide and self harm; 10
  - (c) to work with relevant bodies to develop a system of alerts and blocks for internet searches relating to suicide, and to implement a “Notice and Takedown” procedure by which service providers remove or disable access to potentially harmful content hosted on their networks; 15
  - (d) to carry out such other functions as are conferred by, or by virtue of, this or any other enactment.
- (2) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide for the Commission to have an additional function if it appears to the Secretary of State that it is necessary or expedient for the Office to have the function in relation to any of its objectives. 20
- (3) Regulations under subsection (2) shall be made by statutory instrument and no regulations shall be made unless a draft has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, each House of Parliament. 25
- (4) The Office must exercise its functions effectively and efficiently.

### 4 Short title, commencement and extent

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Suicide (Prevention) Act 2013.
- (2) This Act comes into force at the end of the period of 2 months beginning with the day on which it is passed. 30
- (3) This Act extends to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

## SCHEDULE

Section 1

### OFFICE FOR THE PREVENTION OF SUICIDE AND SELF HARM

#### *Membership*

- 1 The Office is to consist of a member to chair it and six other members, appointed by the Secretary of State following a pre-appointment hearing by, and with the consent of, the Home Affairs Committee of the House of Commons. 5

#### *Employees*

- 2 The Office may employ staff.
- 3 Staff are to be employed on such terms as to remuneration and other matters as the Office may, with the approval of the Minister for the Civil Service, determine. 10
- 4 Service as a member of staff of the Office is employment in the civil service of the State.

#### *Annual report*

- 5 (1) The Office must prepare a report of the performance of its functions in each financial year. 15
- (2) The report relating to a financial year must be prepared as soon as possible after the end of the financial year.
- (3) The report must be sent to the Home Office. 20
- (4) The Home Office must lay the report before Parliament.
- (5) “Financial year” means—
- (a) the period which begins with the day on which this Schedule comes into force and ends with the following 31 March;
- (b) each successive period of 12 months. 25

#### *Accountability and Reporting*

- 6 It will be the responsibility of the Secretary of State to table responses to reports of the Office in Parliament.

#### *Finance*

- 7 (1) *The budget of the Office will be agreed by the Secretary of State.* 30
- (2) *The Home Office may make to the Office such payments out of money provided by Parliament as it considers appropriate for the purpose of enabling the Office to meet its expenses.*

- (3) *Payments are to be made at such times, and subject to any such conditions, as the Home Office considers appropriate.*

*Accounts and audit*

- 8 (1) The Office must –
- (a) keep proper accounts and proper records in relation to its accounts, and 5
  - (b) prepare in respect of each financial year a statement of accounts.
- (2) Each statement of accounts must comply with any directions given by the Home Affairs Committee as to –
- (a) the information to be contained in it and the manner in which it is to be presented; 10
  - (b) the methods and principles according to which the statement is to be prepared, and
  - (c) the additional information (if any) which is to be provided for the information of Parliament. 15
- (3) The Office must send a copy of each statement of accounts to –
- (a) the Secretary of State, and
  - (b) the Comptroller and Auditor General,
- before the end of the month of June next following the financial year to which the statement relates. 20

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## B I L L

To require the Secretary of State to set up a body to establish a public initiative for the prevention of suicide and self harm, to work with internet providers and others to reduce access to information on the internet and through other sources on methods of suicide and to develop a system of alerts and blocks for internet searches relating to suicide; and for connected purposes.

*Ordered to be brought in by Dr William McCrea,  
Mr Nigel Dodds, Ian Paisley, David Simpson,  
Lady Hermon, Ms Margaret Ritchie, Naomi Long,  
Mrs Madeleine Moon, Paul Goggins, Kate Hoey  
and Andrew Percy.*

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons,  
to be Printed, 13 November 2012.*

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