

One Hundred Eighth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the twentieth day of January, two thousand and four*

An Act

To amend the Public Health Service Act to support the planning, implementation, and evaluation of organized activities involving statewide youth suicide early intervention and prevention strategies, to authorize grants to institutions of higher education to reduce student mental and behavioral health problems, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) More children and young adults die from suicide each year than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, and chronic lung disease combined.

(2) Over 4,000 children and young adults tragically take their lives every year, making suicide the third overall cause of death between the ages of 10 and 24. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the third overall cause of death among college-age students.

(3) According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, children and young adults accounted for 15 percent of all suicides completed in 2000.

(4) From 1952 to 1995, the rate of suicide in children and young adults tripled.

(5) From 1980 to 1997, the rate of suicide among young adults ages 15 to 19 increased 11 percent.

(6) From 1980 to 1997, the rate of suicide among children ages 10 to 14 increased 109 percent.

(7) According to the National Center of Health Statistics, suicide rates among Native Americans range from 1.5 to 3 times the national average for other groups, with young people ages 15 to 34 making up 64 percent of all suicides.

(8) Congress has recognized that youth suicide is a public health tragedy linked to underlying mental health problems and that youth suicide early intervention and prevention activities are national priorities.

(9) Youth suicide early intervention and prevention have been listed as urgent public health priorities by the President’s New Freedom Commission in Mental Health (2002), the Institute of Medicine’s Reducing Suicide: A National Imperative