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March 18, 2025

The Honorable Eric Morrison
411 Legislative Ave
Dover, DE 19901

**RE: DHA Supporting Comments for the establishment of the
Office of Suicide Prevention (HB 54)**

Dear Representative Morrison,

On behalf of Delaware's hospitals and health systems, thank you for the opportunity to express support for House Bill 54, which would establish the Office of Suicide Prevention within the Department of Health and Social Services' Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health.

According to the Center for Disease Control, nearly 50,000 people in the United States died by suicide in 2022 alone. In Delaware, 130 died by suicide, a 25.3% increase from 20 years earlier. Currently, Delaware is the only state without an Office of Suicide Prevention, while all other 49 other states have one in place. Suicide is a serious public health issue, and a centralized office would ensure Delaware's residents have access to essential state resources.

Additionally, recent studies have shown the risk of suicide is higher for healthcare workers compared to non-healthcare workers. DHA has supported legislation in recent years aiming to remove the barriers that prevent healthcare providers from seeking help for mental health concerns. Delaware hospitals have also implemented well-being initiatives seeking to reduce burnout and help improve wellness for our hardworking doctors, nurses, and caregivers. HB 54 is another critical step in a comprehensive approach to preventing suicide in the healthcare workforce and beyond.

Thank you for the opportunity to share DHA's support for HB 54 and for your leadership on this critically important issue. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the General Assembly to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Christina Bryan'.

Christina Bryan
Vice President, External and Governmental Affairs



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